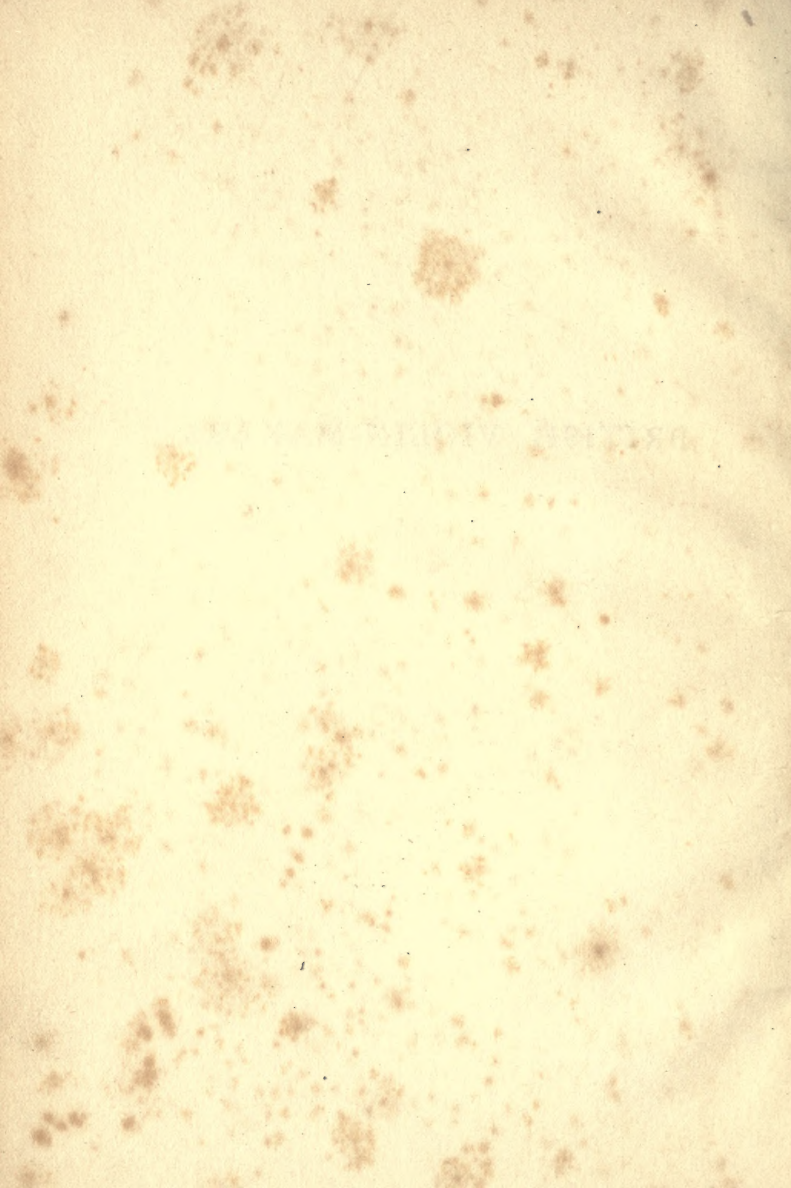


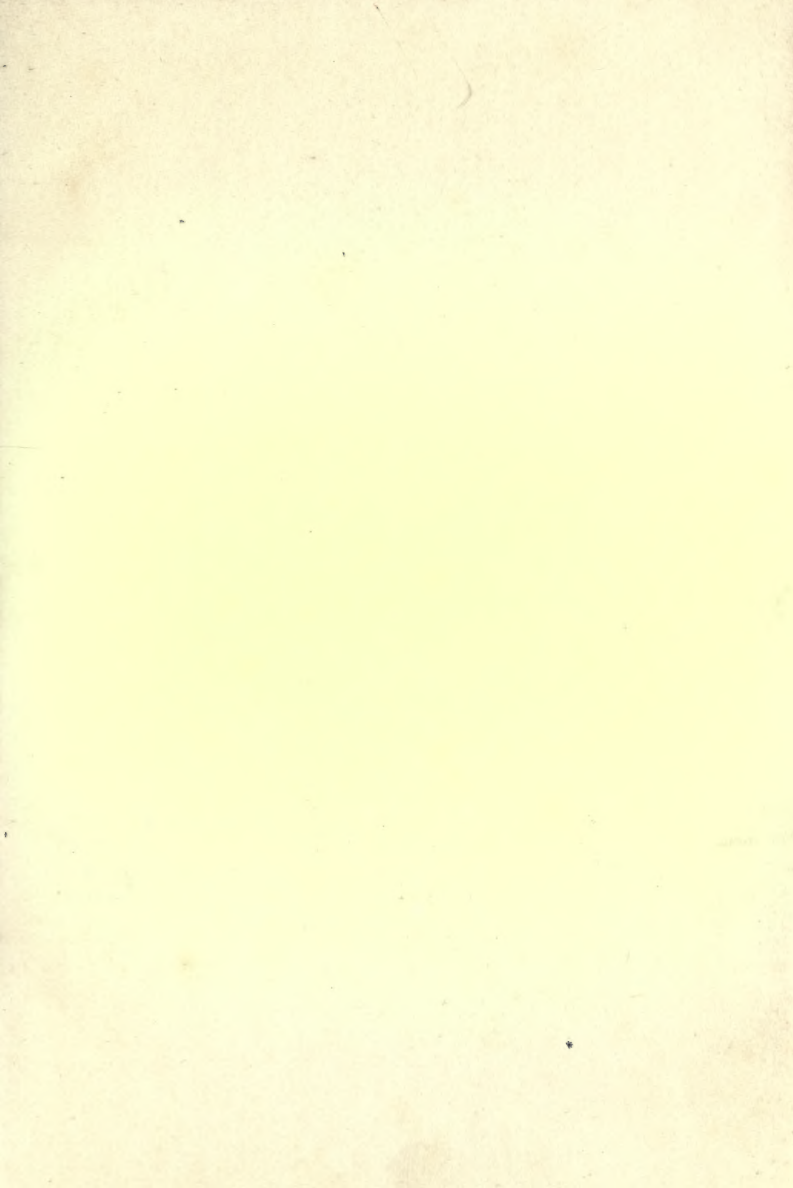
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BRITISH VIOLIN-MAKERS







Cours very Sincerely,
Wm. McElwath. Morris.

BRITISH VIOLIN-MAKERS

CLASSICAL AND MODERN

Being a Biographical and Critical Dictionary of British
Makers of the Violin from the Foundation of
the Classical School to the End of
the Nineteenth Century

WITH INTRODUCTORY CHAPTERS, AND NUMEROUS
PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BY THE

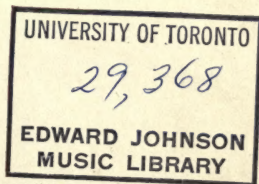
REV. WM. MEREDITH MORRIS, B.A.



LONDON

CHATTO & WINDUS

1904



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Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
At the Ballantyne Press

PREFACE

THE following pages are the fruit of many years patient labour. The author has spent nearly all the spare moments of his life in the active service of the King of Instruments, and the effort embodied herein is homage paid by a loyal subject to a worthy monarch. No doubt the work will be found to contain many imperfections—all things human do—but it at least claims the merit of independent research. The information given is invariably based upon personal observation, except in a few cases where it was impossible to get at particulars first-hand. The modern school of violin-making, it will be observed, is for the first time treated with the amplitude and the respect which its importance demands. During the last seven years the writer has examined over a thousand new instruments, the majority of which were well made, and not a few of them as fine examples of the luthier's art as the world has ever produced. An important feature of the work is the reproduction of a large number of labels in exact facsimile, and it is matter of sincere regret to the author that he has not been able to extend the feature throughout. Perhaps the courtesy of violin-makers will enable him to do so in a second edition should such edition be fortunately called for. It is possible that the names of some present-day makers may be found wanting

in the biographical dictionary ; if so, it happens because the makers in question did not reply to the circular sent out asking for information.

The portion of the work dealing with the classical school contains, it is believed, a great deal that is interesting and not a little that is new. Particular attention has been paid to accuracy in the matter of dates—a point in which writers on the subject have not always been as scrupulous as they should be.

Sincere thanks are due to all who have contributed biographical particulars, or who have otherwise helped to make the work a success.

W. MEREDITH MORRIS.

GARTH PARSONAGE,
MAESTEG, S. WALES,
January 1, 1904.

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PART I
INTRODUCTORY



BRITISH VIOLIN-MAKERS

I.—THE CLASSICAL SCHOOL

THE classical period of British violin-making is almost conterminous with the eighteenth century, and embraces the work of Parker, Duke, Banks, Forster, and other men of less note. It is advantageous to review its remains from the point of view of model, material, varnish, workmanship, and tone.

A.—THE MODEL

In contemplating the model adopted by our old makers, two features alone seem to stand out sufficiently prominent to arrest the attention of the connoisseur, viz. the absence of originality and the inferiority of the type adopted. The manifest poverty of idea is very extraordinary when we consider that the English excelled as makers of the lute and viol. There can be no doubt that viols of British manufacture were *facile princeps* among instruments of that type. We gather as much from a work by Jean Rousseau entitled *Traité de la Viole*, which was published in Paris in 1687; from numerous statements on the subject in Mace's "Musick's Monument," and from other works dealing with the history of music. So extraordinary are the

above features considered to be that most writers on the subject have thought it necessary to endeavour to account for them. Hart, in his standard work, "The Violin: Its Famous Makers and their Imitators," offers the following explanation: "It may be that Continental connoisseurs have credited themselves with the works of our best makers, and expatriated them, while they have inexorably allowed bad English fiddles to retain their nationality." This is possible, but hardly probable. Connoisseurs are blessed with an open mind and an easy conscience, we know, but we doubt whether, apart from their tonal qualities, there be sufficient merit in our classical instruments to tempt dealers to practise the black art. Instruments that are intended to take their rôle in a masquerade are such as are meant to be purchased by the eye and not by the ear. If lack of originality had been the only defect of the work of our classical school, the explanation would be plausible, but there is beyond that the choice of an inferior model. The British copied, and in many instances exaggerated, the high arch of Stainer. Doubtless there are reasons, and cogent reasons. We are not for a moment to conclude that British artists have at all times been unequal to the higher flights of art. They have their seasons of artistic drought and barrenness like most artists of other nations (and this has somewhat to do, perhaps, with the present subject), but they have also their seasons of early and later rain and plenteous aftermath. I hazard the following explanation. There was—

(1) *An absence of stimulus.*—During the greater part of the classical period the world passed through the chill cloud of universal inactivity. If British makers

were possessed of the necessary talent, the means were wanting which ought to have called it forth. Healthy environment is as much a condition of life as is healthy organism. The glories of the Elizabethan age were past and gone. Reaction—that principle which runs like an undercurrent through the waters of universal history—was already in motion. The force was even now at work which culminated in Latitudinarianism in the Church, in Deism in matters of belief, in pamphleteering in literature, in artificiality in poetry, in Epicureanism in morals, and in mechanical servility in art. Ennui was in the air, and the nation from Parnassus down to Bedlam caught it. There were sporadic efforts, and the efforts show some amount of concentration of energy; but the mere conflux of sudden gushes are not identical with the gentle and ceaseless flow of the stream of genius. Moreover, the remains of our classical period betray *effort*. Now, one of the leading characteristics of the fruit of genius is its freedom from effort. Carlyle was never more in error than when he described genius as an infinite capacity for taking pains. Genius cannot be expressed in terms of resistance, nor its product as the multiplication of labour. It is not hinted that we had no geniuses amongst our old makers. All that is asserted is that the conditions of manifestation were absent. Genius is a plant which, in the absence of sunlight, grows etiolated and sickly. Many and many a beautiful flower has “bloomed to blush unseen.” It gave its blushes to the sun and its scent to the breeze because no one took the trouble to pluck it. The fruits of talent are often lost because no one gathers them; nay, the talent itself is destroyed because it has to be

buried in the ground. The reader will remember, and may apply in this connection, the lines of Gray :

“ Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.”

(2) *Musical Conservatism was a potent Factor.*—The viol enjoyed a monopoly, and the upstart violin in its battle for the possession of the British music world had to contest every inch of the ground. This is painfully if amusingly evident from the vituperations of old Thomas Mace. His remarks have been quoted by so many writers on the violin that it is unnecessary to give them here. The viol held its sway more or less firmly down till about 1650, and for the next fifty years, like a worthy veteran of many battles, it bravely held on. In spite of Court and other influences, the “French fashion” was looked upon by the public as a giddy and pertinacious intruder. Even when supplemented by the “Italian fashion” it found its path strewn with many thorns. Very timely was the arrival of Thomas Balzar in 1656, and of Nicola Matteis in 1672. Their wielding of the magic wand it was that proved the principal means in undoing the conservative spell. By the time the strife had fully ended the eighteenth century had dawned. The art of violin making in Italy was then at its zenith, and Cremona stood unrivalled in the production of the king of instruments. Age and use had done much for the Brescian, early Cremonese, and Tyrolese instruments, and those which found their way into this country were incomparably superior to the raw material

produced by the native makers. Even as the demand on the Continent a hundred years previously had been for the splendidly-made and well-matured English viol, so now in England (that had at length awaked to the superiority of the violin) the demand was for the unrivalled instruments of Italian and especially of Tyrolese manufacture.

Owing to a constitutional abhorrence of innovation we started a hundred years late, and we of necessity lost the race.

(3) *Puritan Fanaticism*.—The furious bigotry of Anabaptists, Levellers, and Fifth-monarchy-men had placed music under a ban, and the gentle voice of melody had been drowned in the hoarse battle-cry of the “saints.” In the fanatical days of “Praise-God-Barebones” many and many a precious old viol shared the fate of the stained glass and carved work of our cathedrals. Puritan England was the Patmos of art. Nearly a century elapsed before the muses ventured forth to fan art into a flame out of the embers of its dead self.

So much for the absence of originality. As to the other characteristic—the inferiority of the type—I fear that no explanation or apology can be offered. It shows lack of discrimination. The old makers adopted the model of Stainer, and followed it with but few departures for the greater part of a hundred years. In following those who had gone before, they unwittingly showed a predilection for the least worthy. Something may be said for the copyist who, conscious of his deficiency in the power of originality, assiduously sets about to copy that which is best and noblest in art, but apology becomes difficult in the case of the

man who imitates the inferior and less worthy. The British in their choice of type showed inability to differentiate between tone nuances, and also lack of artistic feeling in the matter of form and proportion. That they sinned without excuse is perfectly certain. They were acquainted with Brescian and early Cremonese instruments as well as with those of Jacob Stainer. They were in the position to make a choice, and their choice fell upon the inferior model. I am aware that the truth of the last statement has been denied by certain authorities, and it will be well perhaps to bring forward the evidence upon which it rests:—

(1) There were numerous Italian instruments brought into this country by collectors. William Corbett, who resided for some years in Italy, brought back a rare collection—a “Gallery of Cremonys and Stainers.” These were bequeathed to Gresham College, and handed over to the authorities on the death of the collector in 1748, with the proviso that they were to remain open for inspection. Soon after the death of the donor the college authorities disposed of the “gallery” by auction (it is supposed), and the instruments became the property of dealers and other collectors. The Duke of Hamilton, the Duke of Cambridge, the Earl of Falmouth, and others, also formed collections of Italian instruments.

(2) That Italian models were known in this country is proved by the fact that they were occasionally copied.

(a) Richard Meares (1680) adopted the Brescian model, and made excellent violins in the lines of Maggini. This old maker probably made the first English violoncello.

- (β) Barak Norman (1683-1744) ornamented his instruments in the Maggini style, and used labels which are reminiscent of those used by Del Gesù.
 - (γ) An undoubtedly genuine violin by Christopher Wise (1656) is made on the Maggini lines.
 - (δ) Peter Wamsley (1715-51) is admitted by most writers to have made several copies of Stradivari, and to have followed the master closely except in the matter of graduating the thicknesses. He spoilt his work in attempting to produce the Italian tone by over-thinning the plates.
 - (ε) Cuthbert (1700). An admittedly genuine example of this maker is in the Maggini lines.
 - (ζ) Matthew Hardie made many violins in the Stradivari model towards the end of the eighteenth century, and that at a time when the Amati model was the vogue.
- (3) There is further the fact that several eminent Italian *virtuosi* visited this country from time to time. The playing of these must have drawn attention to the Italian instruments upon which they played, and ought to have enlightened the understanding of our makers as well as of the music world.
- (a) Francesco Geminiani came to England between 1709-14, and met with a great success. Here he remained and published his works, making a few artistic tours to the Continent and again returning.
 - (β) Veracini came to London in 1714 and led the Italian Opera Band there.

(γ) Gaetano Pugnani (1727-1803) visited London more than once, and stayed there on one of these visits for nearly two years.

(δ) Giardini came to London in 1744 and remained there for two years.

(4) Somewhere about 1686, the banker, Michele Monzi, of Venice, sent a set of Stradivari violins, altos, and violoncellos, as a present to King James of England. In this connection it may be worth while to mention Forster's assertion that a consignment of new Stradivari instruments sent here on approval could not be disposed of.

Thus there is not the shadow of doubt that Italian models were known in this country early in the eighteenth century, and there is not the shadow of doubt that they were deliberately set aside in favour of an inferior type.

B.—THE MATERIAL

The wood used by our classical makers is for the most part maple and pine of the orthodox kind, but various other woods were occasionally used, either by way of experiment, or on account of a scarcity of the right sort. Benjamin Banks used plain English sycamore for the back of some of his violins, and red pine for the front table of a few of his violas. He once (by special request it is true) used cedarwood for both back and belly of a violoncello. "Old" Forster used common deal for the table of many of his second-class instruments. Richard Duke and Daniel Parker were usually very particular about their wood, and the latter ranks with the most careful of

our old makers in this respect. Would that we had more examples of his art left us! Duke's backs are mostly plain, but the wood is as good acoustically as anything short of Italian gems of the first water. Henry Whiteside, a maker hardly known to any writer on violin matters, used beech for the back of many of his fiddles. One of these, in good condition, is in the possession of the author. Matthew Hardie used anything that came to hand for his inferior instruments, though he used excellent wood for his Stradivari copies. Those who have read "Scottish Violin Makers: Past and Present," by W. C. Honeyman, will remember the tale of the "hidden violin." Benjamin Williams, a Welsh maker, tried ash and birch for the back. Edward Withers, whose instruments are rising in value, was very careful in the selection of his material. The wood in the instruments bearing the label of John Betts is usually good, but mostly plain. These are isolated examples, and the departures from the traditional rule are neither very numerous nor very important. One thing to be noted in particular about the pine used is that it shows a general preference on the part of the makers for wood with a medium "reed" or grain. Very few instances there are of either close or wide grained wood. Some of the best examples of "old" Forster are an exception to the rule, but these have common English deal, and not Swiss pine.

C.—THE VARNISH

The varnish is excellent as regards elasticity and adhesiveness. The oil varnish of our classical school will probably wear better than that of any other school.

I have seen many a badly cracked and battered old Duke and Forster with the varnish still plentiful and "defiant." Of but few Italian instruments can this be said. The majority of the best of them are quite bare. Nothing short of a smart blow will damage the English varnish. I have seen a Dodd's 'cello varnished with the celebrated "original Cremona varnish," which had a hole knocked in one of the bouts, and the varnish around the scraggy edges had parted "clean." There was not a suspicion of "chip" or transversal cracks. In this respect the classical varnish contrasts favourably with some of the best varnishes of the modern school. One drawback, *e.g.*, of the famous varnish of Mr. James Whitelaw is that it is brittle, and that it "chips" in a most provoking manner. In other respects, the modern varnish is far superior to that of the classical school. The varnish of even the best of the old makers lacks colour and brilliancy. On the finest of Duke's instruments, for instance, it is elastic, tough, and withal soft, but dull and lifeless. Some of the deeper-hued varnishes of Forster may be said to possess colour, but it is colour devoid of fire and translucency. The best work of Banks, much of which has received high praise, is frequently open to the same criticism.

But colour and transparency, I admit, are not so important as elasticity and adhesiveness. In its bearing upon tone, elasticity is the most important of all the *known* factors. I say "known," because it is highly probable that the varnish has a subtle influence upon the colour of the tone, the nature of which is not yet precisely understood. I am inclined to think with the Messrs. Hill (*vide* their *Life of Stradivari*) that the

varnish plays a much more important part in the evolution of tone nuance than is usually admitted.

It is remarkable that so few authentic recipes of old varnishes have been handed down to us. This is a fact which militates against the view that the nature of the ingredients and the method of making them into a varnish were regarded as a trade secret. Secrets were generally confided to black and white, paradoxical as it might sound. The secret of many a long-lost art consists in the fact that at the time it was practised it was no secret at all. If the art of embalming had been regarded in ancient Egypt as a mystery, we should probably know more about it to-day. At one time everybody knew in the land of the Pharaohs how the mighty Cheops was built, and how the stones were quarried and conveyed, and the fact that everybody knew then is the main reason why nobody knows now. The masters of painting had no dark chambers wherein they mixed their pigments: it would be better for modern artists if they had.

On the other hand, make a mystery of an art, and you thereby secure for it a niche in one of the safest recesses of Walhalla. The art of the necromancer in the days of Aaron was a secret, but the pundits of India practise it to-day. Archimedes enshrouded with a veil of mystery the principle which he discovered, and which is named after him, and, thanks to the fact, the world has not had to rediscover the law of specific gravity.

Innumerable instances might be quoted in support of my statement, but sufficient have been given to illustrate the point.

The inference is this: the varnish of Stradivari, Guarneri, and other Cremonese, was no trade secret,

otherwise we should be familiar with its composition to-day. Dodd guarded his mixture with a jealous eye, but his varnish has been reproduced many and many a time since he laid his brush to rest.

Our classical makers used both oil and spirit varnishes. The gums, resins, &c., which entered into their composition are perfectly familiar to us. One thing alone is doubtful, viz., whether or not in these sinful days we get the pure and unadulterated article. A list of these substances is given in an appendix to the valuable work of Mr. Edward Heron-Allen, "Violin Making, as it Was and Is," and the reader who wishes for full information on the subject is referred to that work.

I do not think our great makers varnished as the moderns do, and as the Italian masters undoubtedly did. The varnish appears to be perfectly homogeneous, that is to say, there is no sizing of colourless varnish of one kind with subsequent coats of colour varnish. There is no foil of golden sheen, which would etherealise the fire of the varnish. All that was probably done in the majority of instances was the mere rubbing of a little oil into the wood, followed by the application of varnish in the usual way. A few instruments, it must be admitted, show evidence of some such sizing as that of gamboge, notably amongst the examples of Daniel Parker and Forster — *the* Forster—but this is the exception, not the rule.

D.—THE WORKMANSHIP

The distinguishing feature of the workmanship is solidity. A few of Duke's finest efforts may be con-

sidered graceful and refined; some of Parker's free and flowing in style, &c. Still "solidity" is the characteristic. A typical maker would be Daniel Parker. Here we have plenty of timber, an absence of regard for the finer details, and a sense of unconcerned self-reliance and determination. If there is no general refinement, there is also no vulgarity. The makers followed in the wake of their Continental progenitors, and we feel that, although they did not cut out a path of their own, they were all the more sure of the road. We may miss the impress of genius, but we have the compensating balance of common sense. Another notable feature of the workmanship is uniformity. The great names did not stand far apart. In the commercial workaday parlance of dealers, the best instrument will not give the worst a margin of more than £30. I am speaking here of the productions of the best makers. It is not so with the work of any of the Continental schools. Some of Stradivari's gems are offered to-day (1903) for £2500, and one instrument, the Salabue Strad, sold a few years since for £2000; whereas a fine example of Storioni was sold a couple of months back for £40. The noble army of British artists walks abreast. There may be a first maker, but the second is like unto him; in fact, they are all very much alike.

Many of our second-class and inferior instruments were evidently built without a mould. So were a large number of the Italian ones; but there is this difference in the result: the latter are invariably crude and irregular; the former are, at the worst, only quaint and rugged. Our average British luthier may not be highly artistic, but he never is truly barbarous.

The interior of all classical work is slightly rough, the marks of the chisel and gouge being mostly discernible. Especially is this the case with the end blocks, which are rounded off in a more or less haphazard fashion with the chisel. In the larger instruments the blocks are often shaped by about a dozen applications of the chisel. I do not think our old makers troubled themselves much about glass-paper and its uses, either in the finishing of the exterior or the interior. They handled their scraper very nattily, and were content with the result. This is not at all to be deprecated, as sandpaper is an enemy of "character." Nor were they at all times over particular about matching their wood. I have seen fine examples of Duke and Forster with an odd rib, cut the wrong way of the grain to match the other ribs. Mr. Richard Hilton, of Matlock Bridge, possesses a genuine Daniel Parker, date 1712, with the right upper rib cut differently from the rest. There is, or was, in the possession of H. Seymour Allen, Esq., of Cresselly House, Pembroke, a beautiful Duke fiddle with a joint back, the wood of the left half being of a broad curl, and that of the other of a narrow, regular curl. A Mr. O'Connor, residing in Waterford, has a Benjamin Banks tenor in excellent preservation, the ribs of which have been cut from three different pieces of timber varying in width of curl. Many specimens of Matthew Hardie show three different kinds of figure in scroll, ribs, and back. These are isolated cases, but instances might be multiplied indefinitely. The English scrolls show much strength and decision. Curiously enough those of Benjamin Banks, our recognised chief, are somewhat

weak in design and execution. Richard Tobin cut scrolls which vie with the best work of Stradivari, but the poor man has been robbed of his due by an unscrupulous posterity. Dealers, perceiving the aristocratic bearing of the heads, have ruthlessly decapitated them in most instances and put them on democratic shoulders. I am glad, however, to be able to give an illustration of an undoubtedly genuine Tobin scroll (*vide* "Tobin," Part II.).

The sound-holes do not call for any general remarks, as they are dealt with individually under the names of the respective makers. There is one point more in the general character of the workmanship which calls for criticism, and that is, the absence of purfling in a large number of the mediocre instruments, and in not a few of the better class. Ink-lines, however carefully drawn, are but an eyesore and a sham, and, what is still worse, they afford no protection to the exposed edges.

E.—THE TONE

A most remarkable fact connected with British instruments of the classical period, and one which has escaped the notice of all writers on the subject, is, that their tone is the very antipode of that of Stainer's instruments, which our luthiers copied so slavishly for three-quarters of a century. Our artists followed Stainer's lines, but they gave us a tone approximating to that of Amati. The tone is not so thickly crusted with sugar as that of Nicolo, it is true, but the coating is sugar, nevertheless, and not absinth. The best description of the Stainer

tone that I am acquainted with is that given by the Rev. H. R. Haweis in his "Old Violins" (pp. 98, 99); well, that description cannot be applied to the tone of any English instrument of the eighteenth century. This phenomenon has its post-classical counterpart. Makers from 1800 to 1860 have copied Stradivari in the main, and they have given us the Stainer tone! There were hundreds of Stainer copies produced in the eighteenth century, some of them very exact in the matters of outline, arching, thick-nessing, &c., but I have never come across a single instrument of that period the tone of which could be said to bear the slightest resemblance to the tone of the great German. Our classical tone is rather small, but bright and silvery. Why is it they failed to reach their ideal? And why is it that the majority of modern copyists also fail? I do not care to volunteer even a surmise: the violin world is already too full of surmises. Suffice it to point out the fact. This much is pretty certain, however—namely, that those who are in quest of the "Excalibur" of Antonio had better go further afield than the air mass, graduation of thicknesses, theories, and such like, the pursuit of which is as fruitless as the search for the holy Gandiva in "the far Lauchityan sea." Time and use do a great deal for tone, no doubt, but they do not alter its inherent qualities. No length of time nor any amount of use will transform the fairy-bell tone of Duke, Banks, Forster, &c., into the roaring, razor tone of Stainer.

I fully agree with those who assert that the qualities of our classical tone have been much underestimated. Duke in his best work rivals N. Amati.

Daniel Parker has a charming tone—"bashfully sweet" would be an apt description. The violoncellos of Benjamin Banks are magnificent—the *vox humana* complexion of their tone is quite remarkable.

The classical tone may not fill our large music halls, but it will penetrate to every part of them, and ought to win, where it fails to conquer, by its fascinating sweetness. It would be well if present-day makers realised that loudness is not the chief element of musical sound. Purity and sweetness are before all other qualities. These are the days of "loud" things, and even music in order to appeal to vulgar taste has to conform to the type *à la mode*. The advice is given by a writer of eminence that violin-makers who would be the Stradivaris of the future must look forward and contrive means that will ensure an immense tone. What the writer probably means is this: that makers should try to put the soul of an organ into the body of a fiddle. But I prefer the fiddle with its own soul in its own body.

N. Amati has never been surpassed for thrilling, silvery sweetness, and I, for one, much prefer his quiet company in a chamber to that of any loud aspirant to future greatness in a large hall.

In conclusion, I submit that in the supremely important matter of tone production, the British classical school takes rank next to that of the Italian. There are one or two French makers who are superior to our best artists, perhaps, but only one or two. The rank and file of French luthiers are not fit to hold a rush-light to our old makers. Stainer is, of course, in spite of his pepper and vinegar, head and shoulders above us; but one man does not constitute a school. He

may create a school, but he is a *solus unus*, and not the *totus*.

Let possessors of genuine Dukes, Parkers, Banks, Forsters, &c., take care of their treasures. The time will come when they, or their children, will know how to value them at their true worth. First-class Italian instruments are becoming rarer every year. The instruments of Lupot, Pique, and one or two other Frenchmen, are also becoming rarer. Third-class Italian and other French work is not superior to our classical remains—nay, it is not even equal to it in the paramount quality—TONE.

II.—THE MODERN SCHOOL

A.—THE REVIVAL OF VIOLIN-MAKING

IGNORANCE and prejudice unite in disputing the existence of a modern British school of violin-making, and some writers calmly assert that the art of violin-making is dead in Great Britain since the year 1850! I can understand some irresponsible people making rash statements of this sort for trade or similar reasons, but I cannot comprehend the man who sits down to deliberately write, and then unblushingly publish them to mislead the thousands. The glorious art was never more alive in this country than it is to-day. There are at least thirty professional luthiers of the present day, and about five times that number of amateurs and occasional makers. This number is exclusive of dealers in factory fiddles, Anglo-French makers, &c., all of which classes have no claim to consideration in a work dealing purely with British violin-making. Since the year 1850 the British school has been born again—born to a higher and a nobler life, I believe. We have now working with us Mayson, Withers, Gilbert, Atkinson, Hesketh, Owen, Hardie, &c., much of whose work will be considered classics a hundred and fifty years hence. Some of these have struck out a path for themselves, and the British school shows unmistakable signs of originality for the first time. Material, varnish, workmanship, and tone place them in line

with the Italians. Their originality, breadth of conception, and artistic feeling show that the best of them are worthy contestants for the laurel with Stradivari, Guarneri, Bergonzi, Amati, and Maggini. Of course, people who have an interest in the trade in old instruments cannot be expected to admit all this. Dealers are sometimes worshippers at the shrine of Minerva, but they are oftener grovellers before the image of Plutus.

Thirty years ago, violin-making in this country was confined to a handful of men, such as Tarr, Cole, Hardie, Mayson, Withers, and a few more. The famous names of Hill and Hart can hardly be included, for one was a repairer more than anything, and the other chiefly an expert and author. For twenty-five years the growth in the number of luthiers and the quality of work has been steady, and if we persevere we bid well to eclipse the noonday glory of Cremona. To-day the output, both as regards quantity and quality, is very considerable. About a hundred and fifty high-class instruments were made last year (1902) in Great Britain, and nearly five hundred more of the second and third class, both small and great. The renewed interest in the art is due in part to the marvellous activity in the world of art (in general) and letters during the last three decades of the Victorian era. Such books as "Violin Making, as it Was and Is" (Heron-Allen), "The Violin: its Famous Makers and their Imitators" (Hart), "Old Violins and their Makers" (Fleming), and others, have also helped to foster the love of the king of instruments. Greater than all is the impetus communicated to the minds of those with an artistic bias by the influx

into this country of classical gems and by the playing of *virtuosi*, who have thrilled our music-loving public.

It is worthy of special note that the art is making progress by leaps and bounds in Scotland. There are about sixty Scottish makers of the present day, professional and amateur, and on the average two hundred instruments or more have been turned out annually in the land of "banks and braes" for the last ten years. Scottish players are less addicted to the factory fiddle, to their credit be it said, than are we of England and Wales. This is due in a large measure to the comparative cheapness in Scotland of the home-made instrument. The leading English makers charge an exorbitant price for their work. As much as £65 is asked by some for their high-class fiddles. This is unreasonable. It is a rare occurrence, indeed, to find a new violin which is intrinsically worth the money. Hardie, Smith, Smillie, Omond, and other good Scottish makers charge from £3 to £10 for instruments that are well made and acoustically excellent.

B.—THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORKMANSHIP, WOOD, &c.

The salient features of modern work demand close attention. The models most affected are those of Stradivari and Guarneri—English makers giving the preference to the former and Scottish makers to the latter. Maggini, Gasparo da Salo, Amati, Bergonzi, and others are also copied, but not so often. Mayson, of Manchester; Atkinson, of Tottenham; Gilbert, of

Peterborough; and Owen, of Leeds, work on original lines, and their work is superb. The woods used by the leading makers are imported from the Cantons of Schwytz and Lucerne. Our amateurs are not always so careful about the quality of their wood as they might be. The idea has got abroad that old wood is the best, and very often the wood used by them has been almost pulverised by age. The instrument made of such timber cannot live long. I would here raise a note of warning. It is possible to ride a hobby-horse to death; that is, being interpreted, it is possible to make too much of the old wood theory. The right sort of timber, cut at the right time of the year, and naturally seasoned in blocks for about twenty years, is what is required. Some makers ransack the land, hole and corner, for wood which is two or three hundred years old. The result does not reward the labour. The tone obtained is not an iota better than that got by using good wood seasoned for a reasonable number of years; and in fifty or a hundred years hence, when fiddles made from fresh and properly seasoned wood will be beginning to live, those made from very old, lifeless wood will be ready to die. It is feared by some that instruments made from wood of only twenty years' seasoning will shrink. But what about the instruments of the old masters? These, if they have shrunk at all, have not done so to any appreciable extent, and they were made from wood seasoned by them in their own lifetime.

My readers will remember that most Continental authorities agree with me on this point. August Riechers in "The Violin and its Construction" (p. 11) says: "The age of the wood I consider of

only very small importance ; if it has been lying by for five years, ready cut or split, as the case may be, for the construction of a violin, it will then be sufficiently dry, and will need no further preparation. I have exactly ascertained the weight of wood which had been laid by for drying for five years, and then, having weighed it again at the end of twenty years, have found it had not become perceptibly lighter." I have not come across one German, French, or Italian writer on the subject who advocates the use of *very* old wood. In this country, the great advocate of old wood is Mr. W. C. Honeyman, the author of several popular works on the violin. The majority of Scottish makers are converts to his teaching, and use nothing but timber which is at least a hundred years old. I had a fiddle down from Scotland for inspection a short time since which was made from wood at least three hundred years old, so the maker averred. I can well believe it was made from timber that was six hundred years old, for it seemed as brittle as a mummy and ready to crumble at the slightest touch. One trembled to draw the bow across the strings lest it should vibrate into dust. In reference to shrinkage in bulk and weight, I wish to record here an interesting observation which has been made by me. Eleven years ago, I had a sycamore tree and a Scotch pine cut down (*Ficus sycamorus* and *Pinus sylvestris*), and had a small block sawn out of each of the following dimensions: $12'' \times 6'' \times \frac{3}{4}''$. The blocks were carefully planed and afterwards put to season in a cool, dry place. At the end of every year I have taken measurements and weights, and the following table gives the exact result :—

	Dimensions of Sycamore.	Dimensions of Pine.	Weight of Sycamore.	Weight of Pine.
	Inches.	Inches.	Oz. Drm.	Oz. Drm.
1891	12 × 6 × $\frac{3}{4}$	12 × 6 × $\frac{3}{4}$	18 8	15 14
1892	11 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ × $\frac{3}{8}$	11 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 5 $\frac{7}{8}$ × $\frac{3}{8}$	15 6	11 8
1893	11 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 5 $\frac{7}{8}$ × $\frac{3}{8}$	11 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ × $\frac{5}{8}$	13 8	9 2
1894	11 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 5 $\frac{7}{8}$ × $\frac{1}{8}$	" 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ × $\frac{9}{16}$	12 1	8 8
1895	" 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ × $\frac{1}{8}$	" 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	11 3	8 4
1896	" 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ × $\frac{1}{8}$	" " "	10 10	8 0
1897	" 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ × $\frac{1}{8}$	" " "	10 6	" "
1898	" 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ × $\frac{1}{8}$	" " "	10 4	" "
1899	" " "	" " "	10 3	" "
1900	" " "	" " "	" "	" "
1901	" " "	" " "	" "	" "
1902	" " "	" " "	" "	" "

If some one were to make careful and correct observations upon different pieces of maple and pine (Swiss and Italian) and to tabulate the result, it would be edifying as well as interesting. Riechers did so, but he does not give us figures. An ounce of fact is worth a ton of theory. Different results would be obtained with wood varying in density, sap, &c., and climatic conditions would have much to do with the seasoning.

And just a word with regard to seasoning. It is much more difficult nowadays to get a block of naturally seasoned wood than is usually supposed. If our modern makers were to exercise the same care in procuring timber naturally seasoned that they now do in obtaining old wood, they would render great service to the cause they espouse. When they seek old wood in dilapidated buildings, châteaux, &c., they forget that the method universally adopted in seasoning timber hundreds of years ago was that of submersion under water for an extended period, followed

by desiccation in dry air. The newly-sawn planks were sunk in deep water for two years or so, and afterwards dried in open sheds. My father (a Pembroke-shire yeoman), who was an authority on timber, always seasoned his oak, ash, beech, elm, and sycamore in this way, and he assured me from a wide knowledge of the subject that the above method had been in vogue in this country since the days of the Romans. The timber used in the construction of our cathedrals and ancient churches was all seasoned in this manner, so he maintained.

He explained that the submersion caused the permanent tissue of the wood to "pack," on account of the distension which took place in the cells of the meristem, and that the active cells themselves were made more susceptible to desiccation. Thus there was secured a minimum of meristem and a maximum of density in the permanent tissue. He said that the permanent tissues were the bones of the timber, and the meristem the flesh. The bones would last, but the flesh began to decay the moment the tree was cut, and the important point in seasoning was to overrule the process of decay so that it should do the least possible harm to the bone.

[*Query*.—Have we historical evidence of the exact method adopted by the Cremonese in seasoning their wood?]

The workmanship of our leading professional makers is excellent. Attention is paid to every detail of the work. This is a feature worthy of commendation, as the British have in the past been somewhat impatient of detail. Even such seemingly unimportant trifles as the notches of the sound-holes

are now treated artistically. And what a difference attention to minutiae makes in the *tout ensemble*! Each instrument becomes as much a poem as it does a mechanical unity.

English makers somewhat lower down in the rank have yet a little to learn in the matter of purfling, the proportion of widths, the treatment of the button, &c., and many Scottish makers are open to the charge of exaggerating the peculiarities of Del Gesù, more especially in the outline and sound-holes. A large number of amateurs pay no attention to the proper length of the stop, and the majority ought to be more careful in working the neck. A thick, clumsy neck at the shoulder is a severe trial to the patience of the player, for it impedes shifting. Many otherwise fine instruments of the Italian school were a great deal too bulky about the shoulders, but they have been refitted with a new neck in accordance with modern requirements. In the calculation and working out of form and proportion, art and utility must go hand in hand and contrive to give us that which is both elegant and serviceable.

Modern varnishes claim a paragraph or two, both on account of their quality and diversity, as well as on account of the time which has been given to their perfection during the last fifty years. Curious connoisseurs and anxious luthiers have devoted years of their life to the fascinations of the chemistry of gums, resins, &c. Experiments innumerable have been conducted, and hundreds, nay thousands of pounds sacrificed in the effort to restore the lost art of the Cremonese varnish. The belief obtains among contemporary chemists who are interested in the subject

that the base of the Italian varnish was fossil amber. Mr. J. Whitelaw, of Glasgow; Dr. Inglis Clark, and Dr. George Dickson, of Edinburgh; the Messrs. Caffyn, of London, and many others, are its chief exponents. Some amateurs and professional makers also hold the same opinion, and use amber oil varnish of their own make; but it is doubtful whether the base in the majority of these instances is real fossil gum amber. I have tested a few of them, and could find no trace of the actual gum, but simply a little *oleum succinis*, commonly called "oil of amber," and the gums entering into their composition were much softer and less durable in quality than fossil gum amber. It needs a knowledge of chemistry to fuse amber successfully, and especially to develop the fine colours of the above-named varnish makers. Mr. Whitelaw has issued a pamphlet advocating the claims of the amber theory, but I doubt whether experts yet give the theory more than a passing thought or remark, and a credulous shrug of the shoulder. However, the theory is gaining ground, and a large number of makers, alive to the many good qualities of the amber varnish, use it regularly. Our leading makers alone stand aloof, preferring to follow the traditional paths. The present period may not inaptly be termed "the amber varnish period," and the qualities of the varnishes must therefore be described.

(1) The varnish of Mr. James Whitelaw, which has been on the market for several years, is a beautiful production. It is soft, elastic, transparent, and full of fire. Its one failing is its brittleness. A slight blow or a pressure of the thumb-nail will bring it

off clean from the wood. Mr. Honeyman maintains that if it be put on carefully, each coat being allowed about a month and the final one six months to dry, it will not chip. I regret that experience compels me to disagree with Mr. Honeyman. These instructions have been carried out faithfully both in this country and in Italy, where the climatic conditions are all that can be desired, still it chips. But "chipping" is not considered a drawback by some people, because that is also a characteristic of the Italian varnish.

(2) Dr. Inglis Clark's varnish possesses all the qualities of Mr. Whitelaw's, and, in addition, a deeper hue. But it is not produced in so many colours, nor does it set so well. It takes months to dry, and never hardens sufficiently to resist the impression of the warm chin or hand. The ruby varnish of Dr. Clark is wondrous to behold, but fearful to handle. It does not chip, simply because it cannot.

(3) Caffyn's varnish—the patent of which has now been disposed of by the Messrs. Caffyn—is neither so lustrous nor so tender as either of the above. It sets hard and does not chip. It has more affinity with the varnishes of some of our classical makers than any other modern varnish has that I am acquainted with.

(4) Dr. Dickson's varnish is a magnificent production, but it is not for sale. The doctor is only a gentleman amateur, and is not even anxious that his varnish should be known beyond his circle of acquaintances. It is a thousand pities that he does not patent his discovery for the benefit of art.

This list is only typical, not exhaustive. All that

is good in the amber theory, however, is to be obtained in the fruit of the labours of these scientists. Moreover, the varnishes just named are the productions of men who are thoroughly conversant with the mysteries of the laboratory, and not the mere haphazard mixtures of would-be varnish-makers. It would be well for all who do not possess the necessary knowledge and skill to make their own varnish if they used the beautiful varnish of Mr. Whitelaw. This, if laid on patiently and carefully, has a most beneficial effect upon the tone. The effect a varnish has upon the tone is a matter of supreme importance. Scores of well-made instruments are spoilt annually by the use of a varnish which has a deleterious effect on the tone. If an instrument covered with Whitelaw's varnish be examined under a strong lens about six months after polishing, it will be observed that the thin, translucent pellicle resembles the skin of the human body: it is porous. Any one who has gone into the matter carefully knows that the Italian varnish is also porous. In saying this I am not to be understood to hint that Mr. Whitelaw has rediscovered the lost art. But it will be readily understood by all that porousness is an important factor in relation to tone. Some makers close up the pores of the wood before varnishing by the application of albumen, gamboge, &c. This is a serious mistake, as the varnish cannot penetrate the wood. With the varnish under consideration no sizing should be used, but it must be allowed to soak into the wood. All the violins of the Cremonese masters may be regarded as embalmed bodies, the varnish having permeated the whole fabric; so that what we really have is neither wood nor varnish, but a sort of compound of both.

Every fraction of a drop of the varnish which these instruments have absorbed has entered into eternal relationship with the molecules of the wood. So that the nude classical gods have suffered no injury by being deprived of their outer garment, "the blood thereof, which is the life thereof," is still there. The Nessus robe, in this instance, has eaten its way into the flesh, but only to become part of the flesh. No Lernaean poison has robbed the flesh of its vitality and freshness. All our leading professional makers use varnishes of their own make, but nothing need be said about them here beyond a general remark or two. One thing is very noticeable, and that is, the marked dissimilarity between the varnishes of Mayson, Withers, Gilbert, Hesketh, Atkinson, Owen, and Hardie. Apparently they all use different gums, or a different combination of gums. One could easily pick out strips of wood varnished by, *e.g.*, Mayson, Gilbert, and Atkinson from among a thousand similar strips. The varnish of all of these is very fine, and that of some of them quite equal to the best the world has ever produced, at least in the opinion of those who retain sufficient control over their judgment to divide their devotions justly between classical and post-classical divinities.

Little can be said about the modern tone, because its true character, unlike that of the model, workmanship, and varnish, can only become fully known in the future. The workmanship and the varnish are at the summit of their glory when the instrument leaves the maker's hands. Some writers, I am aware, have gone into ecstasies over what they term the picturesque wear of the varnish—the finger-marks of the hand of time. All this is very well in poetry, but when it

comes to purchasing an old gem, undamaged work and unscratched varnish fetch the cash. As regards tone, however, age and legitimate use have a beneficial effect. To speak in general terms, there is too much of the piercing loudness of Stainer about the tone of the rank and file of modern fiddles. As for the tone of the superior instruments of the best makers, it is pregnant with golden promise.

III.—BRIDGES : CLASSICAL AND MODERN

BRIDGE manufacture in our days is a distinct branch of industry; and even as there is a factory fiddle, so also there is a factory bridge, the one lacking in individuality and acoustic merit as much and as often as does the other. Very few luthiers make their own accessories nowadays. A gross of bridges can be purchased at less than the cost of making a dozen artistic ones. Accessories were not imported wholesale in the days of old, when every maker of violins was also a maker of fittings. The importance of the bridge cannot be exaggerated, as a bad one will inevitably spoil the tone of an instrument, however good the latter may be. It has ever been a matter of surprise to me that so many of our good makers overlook this self-evident truth. It is the exception, not the rule, to find a good bridge, and the fine qualities of many an instrument succumb to the perversity of the little indispensable. Factory fiddles are imported by the ton, one would say, and their only quality, to use an aphorism, is their quantity. The tailpiece, which is of slight acoustic importance, is often carefully made and elaborately inlaid, whereas the cheapest bridge made of green wood or baked wood, high and thick, is clamped on the defenceless fiddle. This is great injustice to the fiddle, and to the maker of the fiddle, for neither gets the chance to live

and speak. A good instrument is very exacting in its demands upon the bridge, and the finer are its qualities the finer also must be those of the bridge. Another fact to be remembered is that fiddle and bridge, once properly mated, should never, if it can be avoided, be divorced. They ought to fight their life's battles, for better, for worse, in indissoluble unity. There is a psychic bond between them which cannot be broken without at the same time precipitating their united charm into the gulf beneath. If a bridge which has been on an instrument for a length of time, and which is found to suit it, should by chance get damaged, it ought to be carefully repaired and not thrown away as a worthless trifle. I believe there are one or two artists somewhere in the country who make a speciality of this class of repair.

The present form of bridge originated with Stradivari, but it was as slow in asserting its superiority here as was the Strad model. Our early makers must have been acquainted with it, but they made quasi-viol and divers other forms of bridge well on towards the end of the eighteenth



FIG. 1.—(Daniel Parker.)

century. I have seen few, and very few, English bridges of the elect pattern of the classical period. Fig. 1 is an illustration of a bridge probably cut by Daniel Parker (1700-40), both fiddle and bridge having remained in the possession of the same family for upwards of a century, as is attested by

documentary evidence. This bridge is fairly characteristic of the period, and shows work which is neither geometrically precise nor highly finished. Fig. 2 represents a bridge cut by Henry Whiteside at the close of the same century.



FIG. 2.—(H. Whiteside.)

The bridge is an authenticated specimen, and fairly well made. The bridge of all time advanced its claims chiefly through the instrumentality of the late William Ebsworth Hill. He made hundreds, if not thousands, of bridges, often varying the pattern,

but usually keeping to the best. These are as extremely artistic as the tools with which he made them were extremely simple. It is to be feared that time and the carelessness of players have considerably reduced the original number of Hill bridges.

In the present day the Messrs. Hart, of Wardour Street, make a high-class bridge, which is as good as anything ever produced. They also make a special study of the correct adjustment of the



FIG. 3.—(Bonn.)

bridge, and the possessor of an old instrument without an old bridge cannot do better than send them his treasure to have a bridge fixed on which is in true acoustic unity with the instrument. Many innovations

—"improvements" as they are called—have been introduced within recent years, and the market is deluged with these persistent rivals. Only the most important can be noticed here. Mr. J. Edwin Bonn, of Brading, Isle of Wight, is the maker of the four-footed bridge for violin, viola, and violoncello. He believes that four feet ensure a more energetic and regular communication of vibrations to the front table. The wood is carefully selected and the design pretty (see Fig. 3).

The Messrs. Balfour, the well-known violin experts, have patented a design which they style the

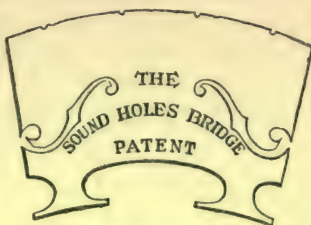


FIG. 4.—(Balfour.)

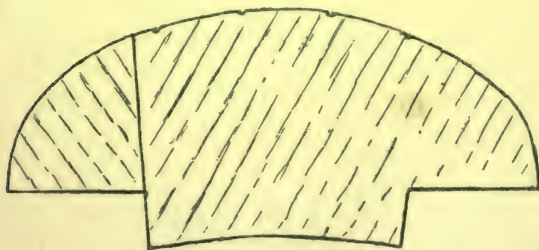


FIG. 5.—(E. Davies.) Back.

"sound-holes bridge." I have never seen the *raison d'être* of this invention explained, but great merits are claimed for it. The illustration will be familiar to readers of advertisements.

Mr. Edward Davies, of Cheltenham, has invented a very curious bridge. It is made of two pieces of pine cut so that the grain runs at an angle of 45° to the perpendicular axis of the bridge. These are glued together with two narrow strips of wood between them, fixed almost in the shape of V, except that the ends forming the angle do not quite touch. The inclination of the grain of the two pieces of pine is

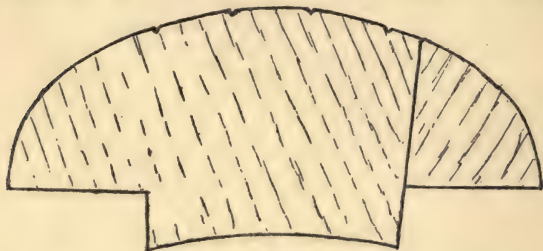


FIG. 6.—(E. Davies.) Front.

towards the base, as shown in the illustration (Fig. 5). Each piece, or half, of the bridge has a protruding wing which reaches nearly level with the sound-holes. The inventor claims that this peculiar and inelegant bridge, in view of the nearly vertical direction of the grain of the wood, ensures a freer and fuller transmission of the vibrations.

There have been sundry other innovations, which have "had their day and ceased to be," and which have made their exodus "unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung."

IV.—THEORIES ABOUT STRADIVARI'S TONE

A MODERATE-SIZED volume might be written on the history of theories anent the Stradivari tone. Both before and since the experiments of M. le Doctor Savart, the violin world has been thrown into agitation almost yearly by the seismic advent of some new theorist.

Theories have invariably had a twofold effect upon the world, which are of a diametrically opposite tendency. The first is "Hegelian" in character, and may be described as the development of concepts by the antagonism of environment. One man has an idea, and this idea is strengthened by the presentation to his mind of another idea differing in connotation or denotation. For instance, the greater the number of ethical systems contemplated by the altruist, the more convinced does he become of the truth of his own that the chief good lies in self-abnegation. And one effect of new theories relative to the Stradivari tone has been that one class of luthiers becomes more convinced of the wisdom of the traditional lore and of the folly of the new teaching.

The second effect of a new theory is that of progress by reaction. Certain minds advance by a sort of pendulum movement. They hold one particular notion to-day, and when a new idea is presented to

them to-morrow, they discard the former and accept the latter. They "reel to and fro" and ever stumble on the new.

It is for the benefit of the class which is thus affected by the ubiquitous theorist that the present chapter is written. It is not penned with the intention of discouraging research or scientific experiment, but with a view to demonstrating the utter futility of theorising for theorising's sake, and of frittering away precious moments in the pursuit of fable. Each of the theories dealt with below has its adherents in Britain to-day, some holding one, some another. Not a few luthiers give forth that they work on the method of combination, uniting in their work the good and the true of all and sundry hypotheses.

The criticism undertaken is avowedly destructive. I do not think the time has arrived when we can by any constructive process build up one safe super-structure based upon positive knowledge. The day may not be far distant when all hypotheses as to the Stradivari tone will merge into one truth, but it is not yet. If the *maestro* had a secret, it is certain that the key which opens the chamber thereof has not been so far discovered. Furthermore, to say that Stradivari produced the differentiating quality of his tone by the united help of the principles embodied in these theories is as wide the mark as it is to say that he worked subject to the limitations of any *one* of them.

Vuillaume, and others since his time, may be considered to have made instruments on "correct" principles. They assuredly were as competent to work on scientific lines as Stradivari was. The exact cubic capacity has been repeated, the relative pitch of the

plates, model, outline, thicknesses, &c.; but the tone—where is it? There may be (and no doubt there is) tone which is quite as round, penetrating, rich, and bell-like, but it is not the tone of the great Italian. I would urge upon our present day makers the imperative duty of accepting new theories only with the greatest caution. "Try the spirits of what sort they are" before you take them for guides. The majority of theorists are blind leaders of the blind. They are ignorant of even the alphabet of science; and that they should attempt the Herculean task of arriving at elaborate scientific deduction is unpardonably Quixotic. Knowledge may not be the monopoly of the few, but it never is the commonwealth of *οἱ πολλοί*.

A statement of the principal theories and criticism thereof in tractile form will now be attempted.

A.—THE AIR MASS THEORY

The gist of this theory may be stated thus: The cubic capacity of Stradivari's instruments is such as secures the exact mass of air required by the acoustic basis of construction. I object that—

(1) It is well-nigh impossible mathematically to secure the required exact mass. The mass of air present in a chamber of the description and character of the violin is not exactly identical at any two moments. Air is highly elastic, and its density at any particular moment depends upon atmospheric pressure and temperature. A mere tyro at hydrostatics would know this. And the quantity of reinforcement of vibration by a volume of air depends upon the density of the air at the time.

(2) The present cubic capacity of Stradivari's instruments is not what it was when the instruments left his workshop. Nearly all of them have been refitted with a stronger bass bar and end blocks, which means a slight decrease in the cubic capacity. A large number of them have been opened several times, with the result that the ribs are not always quite as deep as they originally were. Others are indented here and there, especially around the bridge.

B.—THE RELATIVE PITCH OF THE PLATES

This theory was broached by M. Savart. It is almost incredible that a man of science should have lent his name to a theory based upon what is no better than a famine of data. The theory is, in the words of Fétis, that "the maple plate, or the back of the violin, should be a tone lower than the deal plate [or belly] in order to obtain the finest sonority possible when they are united."—"Notice of Stradivarius," p. 83.

(1) The theory is arrived at by the logical fallacy of non-observation. Savart does not tell us that he examined one back or belly intact—as it had left the hands of Stradivari; but he constructed a fiddle, or some sort of musical box, the plates of which had been graduated to produce the said tonal difference, and the result was, in the estimation of Savart, a Stradivari tone. He had previously prepared six rods, three of maple and three of pine, obtained from three shipwrecked Strads, and he found that those of maple when thrown into vibration each produced A \sharp , and those of pine each F. Armed with this

discovery, he launches out into the sea of acoustics, and casually touching the peninsula of relative density, he triumphantly arrives at the haven of relative pitch. But mark. He does not examine a single whole back or whole belly in its original condition; indeed, we are left in the dark as to whether he examined a complete back or belly in any condition. How then does he arrive at the theory of an arbitrary and uniform relative pitch between the plates? The answer must be, I am afraid—By a mere *a posteriori* guess.

(2) I submit that never have a Stradivari back and belly, *in their original condition*, been examined with a view of determining their tonal pitch, and I throw out the challenge to the world to bring forward historical facts (not irresponsible statements) to the contrary.

(3) I submit further that there is not one known Stradivari instrument in existence with its plates in their original condition. The strengthening of the bass bar must of necessity alter the pitch of the table. The use of glue in repairing is another item which must be considered. A rod of glue would give a very different note from a rod of pine, and although the quantity of glue used in repairing is exceedingly small, still it is a fraction which must be taken into account. A large percentage of Strad backs and bellies have some little glue in their flesh by now.

(4) It seemingly has never entered into any one's mind that varnished plates give a different note from the same plates in the white. There is a difference of thickness to take into account, but more important is the alteration in density. Oil varnishes penetrate the wood and increase the specific gravity of the plates,

especially that of the front table, which absorbs more of the varnish. Presuming that the unvarnished plates of Stradivari were worked to give the required tonal difference, there is no reason to suppose that the said difference would be maintained after varnishing. The rods which Savart tested were charged with varnish, and no correct deduction could be arrived at as to what their pitch if tested in the white would be.

But we must give Savart his due: he did not for a moment suggest that his discovery accounted for the whole of the truth as to Stradivari's secret. Others less endowed with sagacity have done that since his days.

C.—RELATIVE DENSITY

Different pieces of timber differ in density. The *maestro* knew what densities would give the necessary acoustic accord, or "psychic" unity. The supporters of this view are very numerous. Some of our chief writers have lent it their support. The Rev. H. R. Haweis in "Old Violins," p. 230, says: "Charles Reade was napping when he expressed a hope that a certain Stradivari back, mated with a new belly, might some day be united to *some* Stradivari back [*sic*: 'belly' he means] of which he knew; but unless it happened to be *the* belly Strad had selected for that particular back, what reason is there to suppose that the result would be satisfactory?"

To this theory I urge the following objections:—

(1) The only method of determining the density of timber is by use of the hydrostatic balance, and to credit Stradivari with a knowledge of the law of

specific gravity and its application is to demand too much upon our credulity. The great luthier might have been a keen observer of natural laws, but of exact science he knew nothing. I have seen it asserted that Stradivari was familiar with the principles of acoustics and hydrostatics, but no one acquainted with the history of Italy, much less with the biography of Antonio, could have made such a rash statement. Italian peasants and the average Italian artisan are notoriously ignorant of and supremely indifferent to the intricacies of book learning even to-day, and what must they have been two hundred years ago? Any one who has travelled in Italy can better imagine the ignorance that prevails than it can be described. The old luthiers had received at most only the barest of a bare elementary education.

(2) The specific gravity or density of different pieces of pine and maple of the same cubic capacity varies infinitely. For instance, a hundred pieces of pine of exactly the same dimensions, cut from the same log, and from the same side of it, if you like, would be found, if accurately tested, to give a hundred different results in specific gravity. I have conducted an immense number of experiments in this way with the hydrostatic balance, and can testify that it is a rare occurrence to find two pieces of either maple or pine that are perfectly identical in density.

(3) By the mathematical theory of chance, the possibility of Stradivari hitting upon a uniform ratio of specific gravity between the plates in some two thousand instruments is as infinity to zero against him.

(4) If there were anything in this theory, the

slightest divergence from the correct ratio would mean an acoustic disturbance. Now, since it is mathematically impossible to repeat the necessary ratio in so many instances, how is it possible to repeat the result? The "Stradivari tone" is not the property of one particular Stradivari instrument, but of all of these in common.

D.—QUALITY OF WOOD

This theory holds that the peculiar timbre of the tone is due to some particular quality of the wood, and that Stradivari had intuitively arrived at a knowledge of the said quality.

I reply that Stradivari had no doubt attained a high degree of wisdom in the choice of his material, but that his wood differed from that of all others is highly improbable. There is every reason to believe that Carlo Bergonzi, who was his pupil, used the same kind of wood. The sons, as a matter of course, used their father's timber, and after the old man's death they used up all the spare material. But neither Carlo Bergonzi nor the sons produced the Stradivari tone.

E.—PLATE TENSION

This theory has been broached by an ingenious American, a Mr. Louis Hastings Hall, of Hartford, Conn. It differs very little in principle from another theory elaborated by Mr. Otto Migge, which has been termed the "Natural Varnishing" theory. They both adopt tension or elasticity as the pivot of their arguments. The only difference between the two apparently is that the former says the violin is not a

vibrating body, whereas the latter asserts that the increased tension or elasticity secures the augmented and regular vibration necessary to produce the Stradivari tone.

These theories, for they are both one for all practical purposes, shall be stated in the words of Mr. Hall himself, as they appeared in a letter published in the January number of *The Strad* (1903) by Dr. T. Lamb Phipson:—

“ You know how the tension in a drum head improves a drum, well, it makes just as much improvement in a violin ; that is, with the top and back sprung on to the violin rib, the tone is made to improve just as much as the maker has skill. I have gained such control over the working of the tension that I can make any possible power or quality which could be desired. The main principle is quite simple, but has many variations.

“ I cut the top up in an arch (about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch) and spring it down along the side margins on to the ribs. I cut the back so that it touches the inner bouts, and springs down at each end. This throws the tone outside the instrument, and gives it great power and brilliancy.

“ Now, to prove this, I cut the back up in an arch and sprang it down the same on the top ; the tone is entirely drawn inside, so that the bow slides over the strings, and cannot bring out a particle of tone. The arching of the tension can be changed so as to alter the balance of the strain, and each alteration makes a change in the tone. Even the bridge is built so that where the springs exert a pressure, it is filled with tension, and therefore transmits the tone. When the

mute is put on it interrupts this tension and deadens the tone.

"I have found that a violin, instead of being a vibrating body, is just the opposite; namely, a body of tension and resistance. I found out, through a London maker, that Stradivari graded two square spots, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch inside of the upper corners, on the top; instantly I realised why he did that.

"When a top is sprung on, the greatest strain comes between these two corners, and if the wood is not thinned out here, some of the tones are screechy, and right here lies Stradivari's secret for producing an even scale. I could go along down the line and cite a hundred cases where the tension theory will answer every question."

(1) It is hardly necessary to make a serious effort to refute these pseudo-scientific observations. To say that the violin is not a vibrating body is an unpardonable subversion of truth, and shows gross ignorance of the elements of acoustics. Every schoolboy, to use Macaulay's famous phrase, knows that where there is no vibration there can be no sound, musical or otherwise. From a letter which I received from the discoverer of this remarkable acoustic phenomenon, I infer that the writer maintains that the violin itself does not vibrate, but only the strings and the air inside. Now, how the strings can communicate their vibration to the air inside the violin without material transmission, *i.e.* without the help of an intermediate agent, is a problem altogether too subtle for me, and I will attempt no solution.

(2) The bent plates do not retain their tension. Six months will suffice to minimise any tension they

may originally have had. A piece of board, say, 1 yard \times 2" \times $\frac{1}{4}$ ", bent to a semicircle, tied, and exposed to the elements, will be found after the lapse of a few months to have lost nearly all its tension. In two or three years there will be absolutely no resistance left.

F.—OUTLINE, ARCHING, AND THICKNESS

This theory holds that the timbre of the Stradivari tone is due to the definite relation between the above three great unities of violin construction; these unities entering into a mystical trinity of art and producing the one perfect unity of sound.

Whilst admitting the importance of outline, arching, and thicknesses in their relation to tone, I submit that this so-called "trinity in unity" in the art of violin construction does not account for the distinctive qualities of the tone in question, for the following reasons:—

(1) The outline, arching, and thickness of Stradivari have been copied to the *n*th, as mathematicians would say, but without obtaining the desired result.

(2) Many of the finest Strads have had their thicknesses "rectified" by the Goths and Vandals of the art of repairing. This was in the days of another theory, to wit, when it was believed that to scrape away the plates on the inside would give an increase of tone. These scraped plates have had to be patched. But in spite of thinning and patching the tone has still the distinctive Stradivari timbre, as is evidenced by comparison with more fortunate Strads.

If there were an original subtle relation between the "unities," it has been disturbed by the irreverent hand

of time, and, according to the theory, the peculiar quality of tone ought also to have disappeared.

G.—HARMONIC PROPORTION

This is a theory recently broached by a German, Carl Schulze, in a work entitled *Stradivari's Geheimniss*—*Ein ausführliches Lehrbuch des Geigenbanes* (Berlin, 1901). It holds that the proportions existing between certain dimensions of Stradivari's model correspond exactly with the ratios of some of the musical intervals, and that the interior volume of Stradivari's model is an accurately determined acoustic space. "The first law with the old masters was to design the model in such a manner that the vibrations of the parts should not interrupt the vibrations of the whole; and in order to secure this it is necessary that the partial proportions should be inter-related, and also in definite ratio to the total dimensions. The interior length of the body of the violin is 346.5 millimetres, which is divided by the bridge into two parts in the ratio of $\frac{5}{8}$ = the ratio of a minor third, and again by the sound-post into parts in the ratio of $\frac{4}{3}$ = perfect fourth. A straight line drawn to join the corners of the upper bouts would divide the body of the instrument into two parts in the ratio of $\frac{2}{1}$ = an octave," &c. &c.

This theory can claim no further merit to distinction than that it is very ingenious and highly diverting. Two considerations alone need be urged against it:—

(1) The proportions of Stradivari have been copied with the utmost exactitude ten thousand times, but without the result sought for.

(2) "Definite harmonic proportion" is a purely imaginary notion, unsupported by fact.

In conclusion, I would add that whilst submitting these theories to rigorous destructive criticism, it is not thereby sought to disparage the importance of wood, model, thicknesses, &c. Each of these has its modifying influence upon tone. What is implied, and emphatically asserted, is that not one of them, nor all combined, can account for the peculiar quality or timbre of the Stradivari tone.



PART II

A DICTIONARY OF VIOLIN AND
BOW MAKERS
CLASSICAL AND MODERN



A DICTIONARY OF VIOLIN AND BOW MAKERS

A

ABSAM, THOMAS, Wakefield : 1810-49. I have seen two instruments of his make, both violins, one on the Stradivari model, and the other on that of N. Amati. The workmanship is of average merit, and the varnish a spirit one, hard and lifeless. He made chiefly for Pickard, a dealer in Leeds. Label :—

MADE BY
THOMAS ABSAM,
WAKEFIELD, FEB. 14, 1833

ACTON, WILLIAM JOHN, London, contemporary. He works at Gipse Lane, Forest Gate, E. He was born in St. Mary Street, Woolwich, on December 12, 1848, and is the only son of his father, A. W. Acton. He was educated at Rectory Place Academy. He was trained by his father, and carried on business at Woolwich till 1898, when he removed to his present address. He made his first instrument in 1868, and up to date he has completed 110 violins, 12 violas, 19 violoncellos, and 10 double basses. He also makes bows. His wood is good, rather plain, but well chosen for acoustical qualities. His varnish is an amber oil one, of his own make. Colours : amber, ruby, and brown.

His model is original, approximating to that of Stradivari. The measurements are :—

Length of body	.	.	.	.	14 inches.
Width of upper bouts	.	.	.	.	$6\frac{7}{16}$ "
„ lower bouts	.	.	.	.	$8\frac{1}{16}$ "

Width of inner bouts	$4\frac{3}{8}$ inches.
Length of inner bouts from corner to corner	$3\frac{1}{10}$ "
Length of sound-holes	$2\frac{3}{4}$ "
Width between sound-holes at top	$1\frac{5}{8}$ "
" " " bottom	5 "
Height of sides at lower bouts	$1\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " upper bouts	$1\frac{8}{16}$ "
" arching	$\frac{9}{16}$ "

The *ff* holes are original, and are quite in keeping with the contour of the instrument. The scroll is very good, and shows much force of character. The purfling tool is handled almost without a tremor, and the purfle is inlaid with taste. The infinitesimal chips and gaps so often observable in the purfle of some makers is conspicuous by its entire absence. Of course, this is a very small matter, and it in no way affects the acoustic qualities of the instrument, but it is well that it is not ignored at the same time.

The tone of the instruments which I have seen by this maker was powerful and penetrating. One instrument I examined had a particularly fine G string. The tone has nothing of the Amati sweetness about it, and nothing of the bell-like clearness of Stradivari, but it is a good tone, nevertheless, and ought to develop further good qualities.

Here is a facsimile of his label :—

William John Acton
Maker
Forest Gate London 1898

He sells his instruments at prices ranging from £6 for the violins up to £35 for the double basses. His bows are strong and well-balanced, but not highly artistic.

ADAMS, CATHUNE, Garmouth, Scotland. From about 1775 till about 1805. He made kits, violins, and violoncellos. Model, N. Amati. The workmanship is fairly good, but the varnish is very inferior, hard, and of an ugly yellow colour. The tone is much better than the appearance of the instruments would lead one to expect. All his labels are handwritten on white paper :—

ADAMS, MA,
GARMOUTH,
1790.

ADDISON, WILLIAM, London. Period unknown, but about 1650–75. It is not certain whether or not he made violins, but he made viols. Label :—

WILLIAM ADDISON,
IN LONG ALLEY,
OVER AGAINST MOORFIELDS, 1670

AIRETON, EDMUND, London. Period, 1730–1807. His best instruments are on the Amati model. He also made many violins on the Stainer model, and a few, of inferior make, on the Stradivari model—a fact which proves that the model of the great Italian was little appreciated in England and not thought worthy of the best effort at the time. The workmanship is good, and the tone of a fair quality. The varnish is a spirit one, of a lustreless yellow. It has been surmised that a workman of the same name, who was working with Peter Wamsley in 1735, was his father.

AIRTH, WILLIAM, Edinburgh. From about 1860 till 1881. He emigrated in that year to Australia, where he has remained since, only occasionally making violins. His instruments are on the lines of Stradivari, but considerably modified. Fair workmanship and average tone.

ALDRED, ——. A maker of viols. Period, somewhere about the middle of the sixteenth century. His instruments

were very celebrated in the seventeenth century, and much in demand. They were classed with those of Jay, Smith, and Bolles, by Mace in his "Musick's Monument."

ALLEN, EDWARD HERON-, London, contemporary. He resides at 3 Northwick Terrace, N.W. He claims a very warm place all to himself in a dictionary of this sort, not only because he has made one or two fiddles, but also because he is the author of the very popular work, "Violin Making, as it Was and Is,"—a book which has done more real service to the art in this country than all other books combined. Mr. Heron-Allen was born in London on the 17th December 1861, and was educated at Harrow. When he left his *alma mater* in 1878, and became an articled clerk in the firm of which he is now the senior partner, he was already very keen on the violin, having studied under Otto Peiniger at school. He then began with his allowance of pocket-money to collect books on music, but having soon discovered that this was too wide an undertaking, he determined to devote his attention exclusively to books on the violin. The nucleus of his collection were John Bishop's edition of Otto's Treatise, Sandy's and Forster's "History," and a battered copy of Dubourg's book. Then followed Fétis's Stradivari, and the common biography of Paganini. This was a small, but a sure beginning, and to-day his fiddle bookcase is ten feet high by six, and full to overflowing. As long ago as 1893 he refused an offer of £2000 for his library, made by Mr. P. W. Pickup, the enthusiastic amateur violinist and colliery owner of Blackburn.

Mr. Heron-Allen soon found, however, that though there were plenty of theoretical books, histories, and biographies bearing on the violin, the information concerning how to *make* a fiddle was so meagre as to be practically represented by the symbol \propto . His office being in Soho (where it has been a good deal over a century), and the articled clerk of a solicitor's office being a proverbially idle creature, he had plenty of time in which to make friends with the fiddle-makers, and the shops

of the Hills, old Boulangier, the elder Tubbs, the elder Hart, the elder Chanot, and the Withers Brothers, became his habitual lounges. He determined, if possible, to supply the lack of a practical book on fiddle-making. But though he collected a quantity of disjointed information (many, many, the cigars they smoked together, old Chanot—God rest his soul!—and he, in the former's back shop), he did not think, even though he was young enough to have implicit and unlimited confidence in himself, that he knew enough to warrant him in writing a book on the subject. On the 4th and 5th of May 1882, Carl Engel's library was sold, and at his sale he got a few more books on the violin, but most of them were bought over his head by Bernard Quaritch. This necessitated his calling upon Mr. Quaritch and negotiating the re-sale to him of the books he wanted. It was then Mr. Heron-Allen and Mr. Quaritch formed the friendship which still exists between them. This seems irrelevant, but it is not. Quaritch seeing that Heron-Allen was so full of youthful enthusiasm about the fiddle, let him have his coveted books at practically the prices he had given for them, and furthermore enjoined him to write a treatise on the violin and deliver it, as his guest, at a meeting of the then recently (1878) founded "Sette of Odd Volumes."

This lecture he delivered on Friday, June 2, 1882, and he made the acquaintance on that occasion of Captain Sir Richard Burton and Commander Cameron, with the former of whom he remained most intimate until his (Sir Richard Burton's) death. It was Sir Richard that encouraged him still further to collect the literature of the violin and complete his studies of the instrument itself. The lecture was printed for the author by Mitchell & Hughes in Wardour Street, and became No. 1 of his series of pamphlets on the violin called *De Fidiculis Opuscula*; it afterwards formed part of the introduction to "Violin Making." This launched him upon the sea of violin literature on his own account, and after making further investigations in Wardour Street, he decided to get taken on as a casual apprentice in a workshop, and really

learn, step by step, the art and mystery of violin-making. The final "push-off" was given by the publishers, Messrs. Ward, Lock & Co., who just at that time projected their monthly magazine called *Amateur Work*, and he undertook to supply them with a series of articles on practical fiddle-making for amateurs, at what then struck him as the magnificent remuneration of 7s. 6d. per page, the copyright and all rights of reprinting the articles in book form to be the absolute property of the publishers, without further payment. Mr. Heron-Allen was most pleasantly young then! It need hardly be said that Messrs. Ward, Lock have never made him any payment in respect of the many editions they have issued since 1884. Indeed, a few years ago, when the author offered to revise the book for a small fee, they stated that they did not feel justified in incurring the expense!

Mr. Heron-Allen at last made arrangements with old Mr. Chanot that the latter should supply him with wood, at a price, and that he should work at his fiddle whenever he could, paying the sum of 10s. 6d. for every hour he worked in the shop. Chanot made a violin step by step with his pupil, and so did his son Joseph (the first he had made). So it may be said that J. A. Chanot and the subject of this sketch were apprenticed together. Mr. Heron-Allen began his first fiddle, a Strad model on the hollow or "inside" mould, on April 20, 1882, and he took two fiddles, made exactly as described in his book, away finished on September 15, 1883, made, of course, entirely with his own hands. Meanwhile he described every step in his articles in *Amateur Work*, from notes made in the workshop at the time. It is improbable that it ever occurred to Georges Chanot that he was a "chiel" taking notes for publication. If it had, it is not likely that he would have learnt as much as he did of the mysteries of a fiddle-maker's workshop. The two fiddles were made from the best materials procurable. The measurements are those given in "Violin Making, as it Was and Is." They are varnished with fifteen coats of a tender amber-coloured varnish, with a glint of rose in it. This is laid on a coat of bright yellow saffron stain, which gives a speck

of fire wherever the oil varnish has chipped or worn. Not that it has chipped much, for even now it is perfectly tender and elastic. The composition of his varnish is as (or nearly as) described in the above-named book. Mr. Heron-Allen is of opinion, however, that no one can give a perfect recipe for varnish; it is, he says, just like making claret-cup or punch, one begins with a rough formula, and tastes and adds this and that as it seems required, until it is all right. No varnish worth the name, he further maintains, can be made on a set-fast formula—varnishes so composed vary at various seasons and in various climates. It is interesting to note that the Rev. H. R. Haweis appears to hold an identical opinion (see "Old Violins," p. 149). Mr. Heron-Allen's fiddles have matured very rapidly, considering that they are left very thick in wood. The tone is reported to be large and mellow, and of great equality on all the strings. Joachim, Wilhelmj, Johannes Wolff, Simonetti, and a host of other great violinists have played upon the Joseph copy (Mr. Heron-Allen's favourite instrument), and have expressed some astonishment and a great deal of kind admiration at it.

Mr. Heron-Allen has ceased to make fiddles, but is keener than ever on Fiddle Lore. Since 1885 he has continued to amass books on the subject, and he is proud to possess a good many works which are not represented in the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale, nor in the Bibliothèque Royale in Brussels. He published a catalogue of them in 1891-94, in two volumes, quarto, under the title of *De Fidiculis Bibliographia*, comprising about 1400 items. For his first book he was sent by the Commissioners of the Inventions and Music Exhibition of 1885 to collect ancient musical instruments, and he received a certificate of merit and a silver medal; for his Bibliography he was elected *Socio Onorario e Benemerito* of the Academia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. His further publications have been "Hodges v. Chanot—the History of a Celebrated Case," "Fidiculana," and a book of essays on the violin, "The Letters of de Beriot," "The Seal of Roger Wade," a curious early document upon the Welsh Crwth, and "The

Arts and Crafts Book of the Worshipful Guild of Markneukirchen Violin Makers." Mr. Heron-Allen is also the possessor of the largest collection of unpublished autograph letters of celebrated violinists in England. He was fortunate enough to secure nearly all the letters written by violinists to Louis Spohr at his sale some years ago.

Mr. Heron-Allen's labels are drawn in pen and ink, and each one differently. The instruments he has made are at his own and at his father's residence. They were not made for sale, and no price is put upon them; in fact, he would not part with them for any consideration.

ALLEN, SAMUEL, London, contemporary. He is principally a bow-maker. He was for several years in the employ of the Messrs. Hill, and was held in high esteem by them as a first-class workman. In 1891 he started business on his own account as a violin and bow maker and repairer, but he devotes his time principally to bow-making. His workmanship is excellent, and his bows have a graceful and durable *cambre*, which, together with a nice balance, gives them a place in the front rank of modern bows. Allen was born in Cornwall in 1858, and was educated for the scholastic profession.

ANDERSON, HENRY, Edinburgh, contemporary. He was born in Auchtermuchty in May 1839. He has made about 120 violins, and repaired extensively. Model: Joseph Guarnerius. I have not seen any of his work, but it is said to be of good average merit. He received a diploma and bronze medal at the Glasgow East End Exhibition, 1890, for a case of violins.

ANDERSON, JOHN, Aberdeen. He was born in 1829, and died in 1883. He said that he made about a thousand instruments of every description. His model approximated to that of Stradivari, early period. The varnish is an oil one of an indifferent quality, in various colours. The

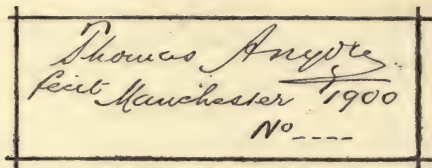
tone is moderately powerful, but rather harsh in the two or three specimens seen by me. Label :—

MADE BY
JOHN ANDERSON,
ABERDEEN

ANDERSON, JOHN, Glasgow, contemporary. He is the son of the preceding John Anderson, and was born December 25, 1856, at Aberdeen. He has made a large number of violins on a modified Strad model. They are fairly well made, and suitable for orchestral purposes. The only instrument of his make seen by me was varnished in golden red, unpolished, with rather weak sound-holes, and somewhat ungainly corners.

ANYON, THOMAS, Manchester, contemporary. A gentleman amateur, who produces excellent work. He was born in Preston, June 8, 1854, and educated at the Normal School there. Throughout life he has always been fond of studious pursuits, particularly of painting, music, modelling, science, &c., with ever the fiddle as his constant friend. It was the perusal of "Violin Making, as it Was and Is," by E. Heron-Allen, which first gave him the incentive to construct a violin. Before so doing he studied the mathematics of the instrument for many months, experimenting with volumes of air acting upon resonating plates of different media, and constructing a sound-box in order to obtain reliable data as to thicknesses and air volumes. The results justifying further research, he made his first instrument in 1892, and is now constructing his fifty-third. During the year 1895 he employed for eight months two assistants to help in the rough work only, but was obliged to dispense with their help, finding from beginning to end that the task of getting anything like the violin art and finish out of cabinet-workers' labour was a hopeless one. His model is original, of full proportions, and very artistic. The varnish is an oil one of different shades. On the instruments examined by me it was a deep golden red

perfectly transparent and fiery. The workmanship is magnificent, and the tone large, rich, and free. The maker's monogram is carved on the back of the scroll, at the base near the scollop. Mr. Anyon tells me that he has sold several of his instruments privately at prices ranging from thirty to fifty guineas. Label:—



ARNOT, DAVID. Worked in Glasgow, and was born at Crieff in the year 1831. He made many violins on the Amati, Stradivari, and Guarneri models, and produced very good work. In 1888 he opened a shop in Stockwell Street, Glasgow, from which time till his death in 1897 he was mostly engaged in repairing. The label is handwritten:—

DAVID ARNOT,
GLASGOW, 1890

ASKEW, JOHN, Stanhope, nineteenth century. Said to be a good maker. He won a gold medal at the Inventions Exhibition, London, 1885, for an exhibit of instruments.

ASKEY, SAMUEL. Worked in London; period about 1800-40. Originally a tinman, he became a pupil of John Morrison, and worked for some time for George Corsby. The work varies in character; some of his Amati copies showing very intelligent work, but the tone is rather weak and harsh. No label of his is known.

ASPINALL, JAMES, Bolsterstone, contemporary. An amateur who produces very commendable work. He was born in the parish of Penistone, Yorks, October 11, 1855. He is of a mechanical and inventive turn of mind, and has



Your servant for Jesus' sake W^m Atkinson

built an organ, on which he was engaged for three years. He made his first violin after reading Mr. Heron-Allen's book, and since then he has made about thirty violins and a few violas. He works on the Strad model, adopting the drawings and dimensions of Riechers, except for the thicknesses. The workmanship is good all over, and the tone moderately powerful, clear, and responsive. Varnish : Whitelaw's. Label (printed in copying ink from a rubber stamp) :—

JAMES ASPINALL,
VIOLIN MAKER & REPAIRER.
BOLSTERSTONE,
NR. SHEFFIELD.

ATKINSON, WILLIAM, Tottenham, contemporary. He was born at Stepney, on October 23, 1851, and is the son of James and Hannah Atkinson. He works at Holt House, High Road, Tottenham, and is one of the best makers of modern times. His full name is William Thomas Reed Atkinson, but he always signs his name simply "William Atkinson." He was educated at Lukeing's Grammar School, Mile End Road, Stepney. At the age of fourteen he removed with his parents to Liverpool, where he had to serve behind the bar for some time at his uncle's public-house, the "Shrewsbury Arms," Oxton, near Birkenhead. This was much against the boy's inclination, but necessity knows no choice.

After that he served as second steward on board several steamships belonging to Messrs. Bibby, such as the *Italian*, the *Arabian*, &c.,—the captain, a Mr. Urquhart, taking him with him from one vessel to the other.

During his seafaring career his parents removed back to London, and when he had got tired of "ploughing the blue" he joined them there, and apprenticed himself to a Mr. Hume, a joiner. He was married on October 6, 1880, to Miss Mary Elizabeth Camper, at Bromley-by-Bow Church. He has two sons, viz., William Camper, and John Benjamin Camper.

His first instrument dates back to 1869, and was made

whilst serving his time as a joiner. Since he has taken up the gouge as a professional violin-maker, he has made 130 violins, numbered consecutively, and many more unnumbered. The majority of the latter he has destroyed, because they did not come up to his standard of excellence. He works on two original models. The measurements of model No. 1 are as follows :—

Length of body	13 $\frac{1}{16}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	6 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
" " middle bouts	4 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
" " lower bouts	8 $\frac{3}{16}$ "
Depth of ribs at bottom	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " top	1 $\frac{3}{32}$ "
Length of sound-holes	3 $\frac{1}{32}$ "
Distance between sound-holes at top	1 $\frac{19}{32}$ "
Elevation from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to	$\frac{5}{8}$ "

A fine instrument made on this model is shown in the accompanying illustration.

The measurements of model No. 2 are the same, except that at the top, middle, and bottom bouts, it is $\frac{8}{32}$ inches narrower.

Mr. Atkinson's wood is excellent. The figure of his maple is, as a rule, of medium width. His pine, which is from Berne, is simply perfect, having a "reed" rather under medium width, perfectly straight and well-defined. His outline is in the best Italian style. It is gracefulness incarnate. A very strong expression, but a true one. As the form of the gazelle is to that of the ordinary antelope, so is the outline of Atkinson to that of the ordinary fiddle. The scroll is a masterly conception and of Pheidian beauty.

The following measurements carefully taken will give a correct idea of its proportions :—

Length from scollop to apex of volute	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches.
Width from boss-edge to boss-edge	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
" of volute close to scollop	1 "
" " at apex	$\frac{1}{2}$ "
Depth of peg-box close to scollop	1 "
" " at throat	$\frac{5}{8}$ "



Photo. A. & G. Taylor

VIOLIN BY WILLIAM ATKINSON

(Fecit 1903)

{ Width of peg-box inside	$\frac{5}{8}$ inches.
{ Diminishing to	$\frac{1}{2}$ "
Depth of first curl of volute	$\frac{1}{2}$ "
" second curl of volute	$\frac{3}{10}$ "
Thickness of sides of peg-box	$\frac{1}{5}$ "

The first turn parts suddenly from the boss, as in the best examples of Stradivari. The edges are softened down gently, with black lines to emphasise the extreme outline.

The button is nearly semicircular, with toned-down edge, and is in perfect keeping with the contour. The margin is one-fifth wide. The edges are strong and rounded; but the "rounding" is not over-pronounced. The elevation of the edge above the purple-bed is almost imperceptible. The margin and edges present a delicately refined appearance. In fact, everything about the Atkinson violins betokens aristocratic refinement. The purfling is one-sixteenth wide, the inner strip having a width which is slightly greater than that of the outer ones combined.

The varnish is beautiful, ranging in colour from pale straw to light ruby, and of the most delicate tints. On a specimen recently seen by me, and which had been examined and most flatteringly commented upon by the late Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, the varnish was straw-coloured and of the richest and tenderest hue. It is perfectly transparent and elastic, and soft as velvet to the touch. It is laid on in very thin coats and dried in the open air. Sometimes as many as twenty coats are given, but the final thickness of varnish is scarcely more than one-sixty-fourth of an inch.

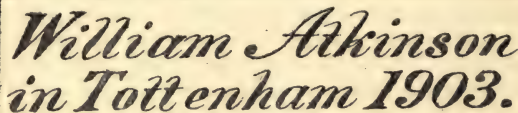
Mr. Atkinson's tone is quite remarkable. It is not exactly like the tone of any other maker, classical or post-classical, that I am acquainted with. The size of the instrument would lead one to expect a tone of small volume, but such is not the case. The tone is strong without being loud, penetrating without being piercing. One need not go to Atkinson for mere loudness. His is a mellow tone with a silver ring. Its echo in a large hall is like the sound of an anvil struck at a distant smithy and borne by the breeze. It is the tone of the dulcimer

magnified, clarified, beatified. It is a delicious tone! For this reason the Atkinson fiddles are pre-eminently solo instruments. For a similar reason it would not be wise to furnish the same orchestra with them throughout. That the gods rain honey on flowers is a kind provision; if they did it on grass they would spoil the world.

Mr. Atkinson obtained a bronze medal at Paris, 1889, and a silver medal at Edinburgh, 1890. Since 1890, he has developed his ideas considerably, and has freed himself entirely from the trammels of the French school.

His price is fixed at a uniform figure, £15. He makes violins only, and all the work is personal.

As a man, the subject of this sketch is highly interesting. He is possessed of a persistent personality. He is unique without being eccentric. His whole character is cast into a mould, and the fiddle is the pivot of his life. He has no spare moments save for one thing—religion. He is busy, but not anxious; modest, but not suspicious. He is consummately skilful as a mechanic—nothing proving too difficult for his gouge. Facsimile label:—



*William Atkinson
in Tottenham 1903.*

The label is varnished over with the same colour varnish as that used on the fiddle, to prevent the ink from fading or running. The maker's monogram is also inlaid on the back under the button.

B

BAINES, —, London; about 1780. Nothing is known of him beyond the fact that he worked for Matthew Furber for some little time, whose pupil he was.

BAKER, FRANCIS, London. An old viol-maker. A bass viol bearing the following label was seen by somebody somewhere about eighty years ago :—

FRANCIS BAKER,
IN PAUL'S CHURCH YARD,
1696, LONDON

BAKER, JOHN, Oxford, 1680–1720. He made viols chiefly, but towards the end of his life is supposed to have turned his attention to violins. No one, however, has seen any of these. Tom Britten had a fine viol of his make in his collection. A four-stringed *viola da gamba* was among the exhibits at the South Kensington Special Exhibition, 1872, bearing the following label :—

MADE BY
JOHN BAKER,
IN OXFORD,
ANNO 1688

BALLANTINE, —, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Nothing known of him. Somewhere about 1850.

BANKS, BENJAMIN, Salisbury. He was born on July 14, 1727, and died on February 18, 1795. He was the second son and the third child of George and Barbarah Banks, of the parish of St. Thomas, Salisbury. From Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," vol. ii. p. 164 (1890), it appears that Banks was not a native of Salisbury, but early migrated there. This can hardly be correct, as it would involve the removal of the parents to London and their return to Salisbury within a short period of time. George and Barbarah Banks were living in Salisbury in 1725 and in 1730, and it is not likely that, in those days, they would have made a move to, and a return from a distant town within five years. But nothing can be stated with certainty, as the old registers of the parish of St. Thomas are lost, and the transcripts in the Diocesan Registry are irregular. The following are the only

entries contained in the transcripts with reference to the Banks family :—

“Baptisms

21 March 1722, George, son of George and Barbarah Banks.

8 July 1725, Elizabeth, daughter of George and Barbarah Banks.

15 August 1730, William, son of George and Barbarah Banks.

20 June 1732, Mary, daughter of George and Barbarah Banks.”

The transcripts are very incomplete, and there are none from the year 1740 to 1778, nor are there any for the year 1727—the year of Benjamin’s birth and baptism. Strange to relate, the burial entries are also missing for the year 1795, as if Fate were resolved to cheat the future biographers of Banks of every scrap of information respecting his birth, baptism, and death! Banks has been styled “the English Amati,” a title which he no doubt fully deserves. It must be admitted, however, that only in his finest efforts does he soar above Duke, Forster, and one or two others. I have seen some examples of Duke which were quite equal as regards workmanship and tone to the best of Banks’ efforts, but the varnish of the latter, when he exercised care in the application of it, gives him the advantage. Duke’s varnish is refined but cold; the varnish of Banks is rich and fiery. As Hart very justly remarks: “It has all the characteristics of fine Italian varnish.” The work of Banks may be divided into two classes: (1) the Stainer copies, and (2) the Amati copies. Banks, when left to his own choice, copied no one but Amati, but his patrons and the trade frequently demanded that he should, in accordance with the taste of the times, supply Stainer copies. No one is responsible for this inference but myself, and it is therefore necessary that I should attempt to justify it. The majority of the instruments made by him for Longman & Broderip, and which bear that firm’s stamp on the back, are Stainer copies, and show work which is inferior to that seen in his Amati copies. Other instruments of the same model, made, perhaps, to the order of private patrons, are also lacking in finish, carelessly varnished, and altogether weak in individuality. It

is as though the good man were impatient of his model, and in a hurry to get the instrument out of the way. Patient labour, loving care, and luscious varnish were reserved for the model of his heart's choice. Only when the material happened to be poor or plain is there evidence of impatience in the finish of the Amati copies. I throw out this suggestion tentatively. I have seen a goodly number of Banks' instruments, and cannot recall a single exception to this rule, but I do not wish to be dogmatic; I only hope that there is some truth in my contention, because I would fain believe that there was one at least of our classical makers who was entirely out of sympathy with the Stainer cult. It is absolutely certain that the best work of Banks is to be seen in his better model, and it is universally true that a man is at his best in the subject he most loves. Lupot was ill at ease except when tracing the lines of Stradivari, or when moulding those faithful copies which he gave to the world of his beloved ideal.

(1) The Stainer copies, as already stated, show comparatively inferior work. The model is long, from $14\frac{1}{2}$ to $14\frac{3}{16}$, with a perceptible narrowing of the upper third of the instrument. The arching is slightly exaggerated, having the ridge quaintly accentuated between the sound-holes. It is as though the copyist had caught *the* salient feature, *par excellence*, of the original, and thinking it sheer waste of time to attempt an extended analysis, resolved that it would be sufficient indulgence to existing wickedness if he reproduced the said feature, *Germano more*, as Haweis puts it. There is not one Banks instrument in existence which can be described as a faithful Stainer copy. The lines of the model are treated with a degree of freedom and developed according to the copyist's own conception. These are the copies which have got poor Banks into disrepute with regard to the varnishing. The varnish has "killed the grain" of the front tables. "It has been allowed to clog the fibre" is the explanation given by some authorities, as though, forsooth, every oil varnish did not clog the fibre. All oil varnishes penetrate the wood, especially the pine of the belly. What is technically termed "killing

the grain" is brought about by one of two things, viz. (a) by the action of one or more of the ingredients of the varnish upon the interfascicular cambium of the wood. The cellulose of the cell wall ($C_6H_{10}O_5$)³ is in the pine tree converted into lignin during the growth of the tree—a substance which is stained dark yellow when treated with acids. The cell contents also react in a similar manner. Especially is this the case with wood that is not thoroughly desiccated, or cut at the right season; (b) the grain is often "killed" by the application of colour varnish throughout, *i.e.* without a first coat of sizing or pale varnish. The sizing (oil) gives life to the wood, which bursts forth through the coloured varnish like the light in a cathedral window on a dark night.

Banks often used wood in these Stainer copies which was not thoroughly seasoned, and he varnished them hurriedly to meet the demands of his patrons. I do not think the wood he used in many instances could have been cut for more than two years. There is evidence of shrinkage. I have gone over a few very carefully with the calipers, and the result justifies me in saying that it is impossible the maker should have worked them so thin. Here are the thicknesses of a violin now in the possession of H. Allen, Esq., ex-M.P. for Pembrokeshire—an instrument which has never been in the hands of the repairer, and which is in perfect preservation: Back, $\frac{5}{16}$ " at centre, gradually tapering to rather under $\frac{1}{16}$ at edges; belly, $\frac{3}{16}$ tapering to $\frac{1}{16}$ at edges.

The tone of the Stainer copies, especially of the violoncellos which have sufficient timber in them, is much finer than is warranted by the appearance.

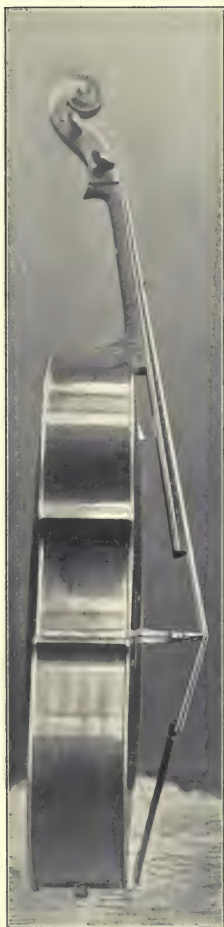
(2) The Amati copies. On the construction of these magnificent instruments our maker concentrated the entire energy of his heart and mind. Wood (except in a few instances), workmanship, and varnish are almost faultless. The only part of the work which gave him any trouble was the scroll, which frequently shows that his strong mind was reluctant to bend altogether to another man's idea. I am perfectly convinced that if Banks had asserted his latent individuality and struck out on



(Belly)

VIOLONCELLO BY BENJAMIN BANKS

(*Fecit* 1785)



(SIDE)



(BACK)

VIOLONCELLO BY BENJAMIN BANKS

(Féit 1785)

new lines, we should have some gems of our classical school which would vie with the very best of Italian work. The varnish, I am aware, does not at any time reach heights which are encircled by the divine halo of Cremonese glory, but it is far up the mystic mount. As copies, the finest efforts of Banks are sufficiently correct to pass muster as originals, and in some cases at least they have done so. I will instance one. The widow of a deceased Welsh violinist and celebrated choirmaster asked me some years ago to value her deceased husband's collection—a small one containing a Stradivari tenor, a Lupot, a Duke, and a "Nicola Amati" violin. The last-named instrument was the pride of the collection, both on account of its intrinsic value and because it had been presented to the distinguished man by the members of a choir which he had successfully led at various National *Eisteddfodau*. The instrument had been bought of a certain London firm for £180 (this was back in the early sixties), with the usual guarantee. I am absolutely certain the violin was not fashioned by the hands of old Nicola, and morally certain it first saw the light of day somewhere in the vicinity of Catherine Street, in Sarum. The scroll is Benjamin's, the varnish is his, everything is his, except the piece which has been cunningly let in under the bottom where the B.B. is usually stamped. The label is rather large, in the correct type, but too fresh and—fatal oversight, under a strong electric ray it reveals with the help of a strong lens what I believe to be part of an English watermark. It is time this pseudo-Amati should have its false ticket extracted and Banks receive his due. The tone has a thrilling, silvery ring—is clear, penetrating, and delicately sweet. The wood is fine, the back being cut on the quarter with a curl of medium and regular width, slanting at a rather acute angle in the direction of the button. Banks' tenors, and especially his violoncellos, are magnificent. The latter are of two sizes, and the larger ones are given the preference. The smaller violoncellos, however, are as excellent in *quality* of tone as the larger ones, and perhaps more so. But in these days loudness takes the precedence of every other abstract, and the tone that *drives* is placed

before the tone that *draws*. One of the finest Banks violoncellos for tone that I have ever seen was some years ago owned by a gentleman amateur in Tenby. It was of the smaller pattern, of rather plain wood, and varnished red. It was in perfect condition, and in chamber music it sang mellifluously like a velvet-throated baritone. I took dimensions of this instrument, which I append here :—

Length of body	28 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.
Width across the upper bouts	13 "
" " middle bouts	10 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " lower bouts	16 "
Depth of ribs at bottom	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
" " top	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
Width of C's	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Length of F's	6 "
Distance between F's at upper turn	3 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
Length of stop	26 "

I obtained photographs of this fine instrument, which are reproduced here.

Genuine Banks instruments are much rarer than would naturally be expected. I do not think that there are more than from fifty to sixty violins, eighty to ninety tenors, and about one hundred violoncellos of his in existence. The peruser of catalogues of old instruments is led to believe that an inexhaustible supply exists. Perhaps the following extraordinary circumstance, recorded here as an object-lesson, will help to undeceive him. In the year 1890, impelled by curiosity, I wrote to a large number of firms for their catalogues of old instruments. In about three months I had a pile of catalogues on my table from the leading houses in this country, and from those in France, Germany, Italy, America, and Australia, some eighty-two in number. To my utter amazement, I found that there were then two hundred and eighty-six Strads offered for sale at a sum total of £78,936, all made by the grand old man between the years 1700 and 1720, and all as a matter of course guaranteed to be genuine! Nearly three hundred Strads for sale in the same year, and almost within the same month of the year!! Ye

gods! Surely ye have added one more! wonder to the seven wonders of the world. The case is much the same as regards Banks. If catalogues, sale advertisements, &c., are to be relied on, then I compute that there have been sold in this country during the last fifty years over two thousand examples of his art.

Banks stamped his instruments in all sorts of places, below the button, under the finger-board, under the tailpiece, &c., and he used various labels, such as :—

“Made by Benjamin Banks, Catherine Street, Salisbury, 1770”; “Benjamin Banks, Musical Instrument Maker, In Catherine Street, Salisbury, 1780”; “Benjamin Banks, fecit, Salisbury”; “B. Banks, Sarum.”

Banks was buried in St. Thomas's Churchyard, Salisbury. His tombstone, which is near the south door, on the right-hand side, has the following inscription :—

RESTORED 1863

ANN,

WIFE OF MR. BENJAMIN BANKS

died 14 Sep^r

1785

AGED 57 YEARS

MR. BENJAMIN BANKS

DEPARTED THIS LIFE

18th Feb^y 1795

AGED 67 YEARS

IN MEMORY OF

THE MOST EMINENT ENGLISH MAKER

OF STRINGED MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

BANKS, BENJAMIN, Salisbury, London, and Liverpool. He was the second son of the great Benjamin Banks, and was born on Sept. 13, 1754, at Salisbury. He died in Hawk Street, Liverpool, where he last worked, on Jan. 22, 1820. He worked with his father for about ten years, but in 1780 he moved to 30 Sherrard Street, Golden Square, London. He

did not remain long there, probably because he failed to command any attention. Very little of his work is known, and what there is does not entitle the maker to anything beyond a passing notice.

BANKS, JAMES AND HENRY, Salisbury and London. They continued their father's business till 1811, when they sold up and went to Church Street, and later to Bold Street, Liverpool. Both were born in Salisbury; James about 1756, and Henry about 1770. The former died on June 15, 1831, and the latter on Oct. 16, 1830. Henry was a pianoforte tuner and repairer, and James a violin-maker. James was a very good workman, and ought to have done better than he did. He followed his father's model, and occasionally succeeded in producing much the same varnish. The tone cannot for a moment be compared with that of the old man. There is a metallic harshness about it which offends the ear. I am not sure that he did not bake his wood in some cases. I cannot otherwise account for the inferiority of the tone. The brothers left a number of unfinished instruments in the cellar of their Liverpool house, which were sold as they were, mostly to the trade. Labels :—

JAMES AND HENRY BANKS,
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MAKERS AND MUSICSELLERS,
SALISBURY, 1800

JAMES AND HENRY BANKS,
SALISBURY, 1805

One of their violoncellos, made by both jointly in 1797, was amongst the exhibits in the South Kensington Museum, 1872. It was the property of Mr. C. J. Read, of Salisbury. It was said to be a well-finished instrument, with a moderately powerful tone of very good quality. Nothing that I have seen by any one of the sons could be said to possess a tone of any distinction. I have heard better many times in an ordinary trade fiddle. The father's mantle fell, not on the sons, but into the river, and was borne away by the flood.

BARNES, ROBERT, London. He was a pupil of Thomas Smith at the "Harp and Hautboy," in Piccadilly. Afterwards he became a partner with John Norris, with whom also he was a fellow apprentice at Smith's. Norris and Barnes started business together in 1765. All the instruments which bear their label were probably made by others. Label :—

MADE BY NORRIS AND BARNES,
VIOLIN, VIOLONCELLO, AND BOW MAKERS
TO THEIR MAJESTIES,
COVENTRY STREET, LONDON

BARRETT, JOHN, London. Period about 1714-30. He copied Stainer, and very often exaggerated his arching. He also worked on a modified Stainer pattern, which was long, narrow, grooved, and highly arched. The workmanship is fair, but the tone is very small and muffled. As a rule, he used ink-lines instead of purple. The varnish is yellow and hungry looking, and helps to give a cheap look to the instrument. Somebody reports having seen a violoncello of his make somewhere, which had a beautiful tone. It is possible that he did make good work, but it has not been the fortune of any of it to come down to our days. He was a contemporary of Barak Norman and Nathaniel Cross. Labels :—

JOHN BARRETT,
AT THE HARP AND CROWN
IN PICCADILLY, 1720.

MADE BY JOHN BARRETT,
AT YE HARP & CROWN IN PICCADILLY,
LONDON, 1730

BARTON, GEORGE, London. Period about 1780-1810. He worked in Elliot Court, Old Bailey. He made mostly for the trade, and little or nothing is known of his work.

BELOE, W. L., Coldstream. He was born in 1819 and died in 1897. He followed the lines of Stradivari, but it cannot

be said that he made one copy of the *maestro*. There is a sort of general resemblance to the Strad outline and arching, and that is all. The workmanship is fairly good, and the tone of mediocre quality. Label, handwritten :—

MADE BY
W. L. BELOE,
COLDSTREAM, 1880

BERTRAM, ALEXANDER, Peeblesshire ; nineteenth century. He worked at Eddlestone. He made hundreds of instruments of a very inferior quality.

BERTRAM, WILLIAM, Stobo Castle. He was game-keeper to Sir James Montgomery, and made violins as a hobby, selling them when he could to the visitors to the Castle. His work is said to be very good, but I have not seen any of it.

BETTS, JOHN, London. He was born at Stamford, Lincolnshire, in 1755, and died in March 1823. He was universally known as "Old John Betts," and was well respected and patronised. He was a pupil of Richard Duke, and, in the few instruments made by himself, showed that he had imbibed much of Duke's lore. The workmanship and varnish have much the same characteristics—the latter being, as a rule, of a tint which is a shade warmer than the varnish of Duke. He did not make many instruments himself, but employed excellent workmen, such as the Panormos, John Carter, Edward Betts, Bernhard Feudt, &c. The work is excellent, but poor instruments were occasionally sold by him, bearing his label. My great-grandfather ordered a violoncello of Betts in the year 1780, to be made by Betts himself. This instrument is now in my possession, and in excellent condition, having been recently repaired by Mr. J. W. Owen of Leeds. It is of the Amati model, plain wood, golden-brown varnish, with rather wide sound-holes. The tone is moderately powerful, and very

sweet and mellow. The workmanship is solid and sober, without being refined and artistic like the work of Betts' master. Betts was one of the first in this country to do extensive business in Italian instruments, and a large number of fine violins found their way into this country in his time. He used two or three different labels. The one inserted into the violoncello just referred to reads :—

JOHN BETTS, NO. 2, NORTH PIAZZA,
ROYAL EXCHANGE, LONDINI, FECIT,
JANUARY 9, 1782

the last line being written. The words "Jo. Betts, No. 2 North Piazza, Londini," are also written across the back on the inside, near the top, and an inscription, which is not decipherable, is written across the belly near the left sound-hole.

BETTS, EDWARD, London. He was the nephew of the above, and worked a great deal for him. Like his uncle, he was a pupil of Richard Duke, and produced work which has many of the characteristics of the master. The date of birth is unknown, but he died in 1817—six years before his uncle. His workmanship is excellent. Its only fault is that it lacks in individuality, and is over-mechanical in its general appearance. He adhered to the Amati model throughout, and copied it with an exactness which has not been surpassed in Britain. Had he been so successful in reproducing Amati's tone as Banks and the other copyists had been, he would rank much higher in the estimation of posterity. But the tone is not bad ; it is round, sweet, and moderately powerful. It did not strike me as being sufficiently clear to carry far, and there was something rather viola-like about it. That might be due in part to long disuse.

I have never seen a label of his.

BEVERIDGE, WILLIAM, Aberdeen. He was born in 1821, and died in 1893. He made many violins, on no

particular model, but which are quite artistic in appearance. The tone is never so good as the workmanship. Label:—

W. BEVERIDGE,
FECIT,
TOUGH, 1870

BLACKBURN, J. H., Colne, contemporary. An amateur who has made a few instruments, but is mostly engaged in repairing.

BLAIR, JOHN, Edinburgh: 1790–1820. He worked on the Stradivari model, and turned out excellent instruments as regards appearance, but not so excellent in tone. Mr. Honeyman is of opinion that he was the teacher of Matthew Hardie, and there is certainly a close resemblance between their work. Wood mostly good and handsome; spirit varnish rather poor in quality. No label, but he usually wrote his name across the belly on the inside.

BLAIR, WILLIAM, Crathie: 1793–1884. He made several instruments on various models. The workmanship is fairly good, but the tone is very indifferent. He baked his wood, and used a hard spirit varnish. He was a noted character, well-known in the North as “The Queen’s Fiddler.” The fiddle of his own make upon which he played for many years at Balmoral is now in the possession of the author. I have given full biographical particulars in my sketch of this worthy in another volume.

BLYTH, WILLIAMSON, Edinburgh: 1821–97. A most prolific maker of wretched nondescripts shaped like a violin, but without any of the usual qualities of that instrument. It is said that he could turn out fairly decent work when he had the inclination, but he very rarely got into that mood.

BOLLES, —, London, early seventeenth century. A celebrated maker of lutes and viols, and the most celebrated, judging from a statement in Mace’s “Musick’s Monument,”

which conveys the information that the writer had seen a bass of his valued at £100.

BONE, PHILIP J., Luton, contemporary. A maker of mandolines and violins. He made his first violin in 1886, and since then has finished several on the Stradivari and Guarneri models. Varnish : amber, in pale yellow colour. I have not seen any of his work, and cannot pronounce an opinion upon it.

Facsimile label :—

BONE & Co.
MUSIC WAREHOUSE,
 MANCHESTER STREET
 (OPPOSITE GALE GARD)
*No. 0. → * LUTON. 1899.*

BONN, J. EDWIN, Isle of Wight, contemporary. He was born on March 28, 1861, at Fermoy, Ireland. He was educated at the Ledbury Grammar School, and was intended for the medical profession, but he abandoned medicine and practised for some time as analytical and consulting chemist. Latterly he entered the violin trade, and is now established at Brading as dealer and maker. He works on the Stradivari model, and also on an original one. He has made personally forty-nine violins, and about a hundred have been made by his workmen. The workmanship is good, and the tone clear and powerful.

The wood is excellent, especially the pine of the front table. The grain, as a rule, is close, straight, and well-defined.

The varnish is Mr. Bonn's own composition. In 1897 he discovered a new and more simple method of dissolving amber, which gives great elasticity and a good range of colours. The method gives absolutely fast colours, and the varnish does not chip. Mr. Bonn does not care to divulge his secrets, but he states that he does not use in the process drying oil prepared with lead salts. Lead, he maintains, injures the colours. The

varnish dries well within the compass of a season, and when dry it does not soften under the heat of the hand. It is, moreover, perfectly elastic and tough. The colours are yellow, red, golden orange, orange red, and orange brown.

Mr. Bonn varnishes all his instruments in orange brown, unless any other colour is specified.

The prices of his violins are : class A, ten guineas ; class B, twelve guineas ; and class C, £16.

Mr. Bonn has several chemical preparations for violin strings, pegs, for cleaning the violin, &c. He is the discoverer also of a chemical method of preparing strings, and it is due to him to say that his strings are very fine. Another invention of his is the four-footed bridge. He makes bows, which are of the regulation length, of full and medium weight respectively, and perfect as to balance and elasticity. The thicknesses were mathematically regulated throughout, the *cambre* following the line of Dodd. These, with silver mounts, are priced at two guineas each. Facsimile label :—

J EDWIN BONN.
BRADING, ISLE OF WIGHT. 1898.

BOOTH, WILLIAM, Leeds : 1779-1858. He began to make violins in 1809, and continued to make and repair till 1856. He followed the Amati model chiefly, but I have seen one violin of his make which was somewhat after the long Strad pattern. Fairly good work and tone. Label :—

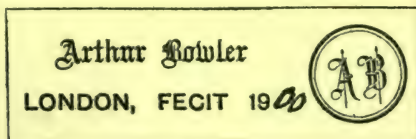
WM. BOOTH,
MAKER,
LEEDS, 1820

BOOTH, WILLIAM, Leeds : 1816-56. He was the son of the above, and an excellent workman. He died on June 1, 1856, and was buried at Burmantofts Cemetery. I have seen only one of his instruments, which was on a modified Strad pattern, rather highly arched, golden brown varnish ; tone somewhat small but sweet.

BOTHWELL, WILLIAM, Aberdeen, contemporary. He worked at violin-making from 1870 till 1885, and turned out many instruments on no particular model and of an indifferent quality.

BOUCHER, —, London : 1764. Nothing known of him.

BOWLER, ARTHUR, London, contemporary. He works at 18 Milner Square, Islington, and was born July 12, 1867, at Thame, Oxfordshire. He is a nephew on his mother's side to the late Georges Charrot. He worked with Mr. J. A. Chanot for some time, where he got on so well that he became principal workman to that firm. In 1899 he started business on his own account, and he turns out excellent instruments, on the Stradivari model. The wood and varnish are beautiful, and the tone is firm, round, and clear. The work of this maker is bound to come to the front in the near future. Facsimile label :—



BRECKINBRIDGE, JOHN, Glasgow : 1790 1840. An amateur maker who made several excellent violins on the Amati model. The wood is of splendid quality, nicely figured, and the varnish pale brown or yellow. The tone is round, clear, and sweet. Label, handwritten :—

JOHN BRECKINBRIDGE,
MAKER,
PARKHEAD, 1830

BRIGGS, JOHN WILLIAM, Glasgow, contemporary. He works at 122 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, and was born at Wakefield on July 9, 1855. He received elementary

education at the Friends' School, Rawdon. His father, who is a worthy old Quaker, gave the son a sound grounding in various subjects on commercial lines. Mr. Briggs has supplemented his early training with wide and varied reading in after life.

He is a pupil of the late William Tarr, of Manchester, the famous double-bass maker.

Up to the end of January 1899 he had made eighty-four violins, eleven violas, eleven 'cellos, and nine double-basses. All the work is personal, with the exception of the scrolls of the last ten instruments, which have been carved by his son Harry.

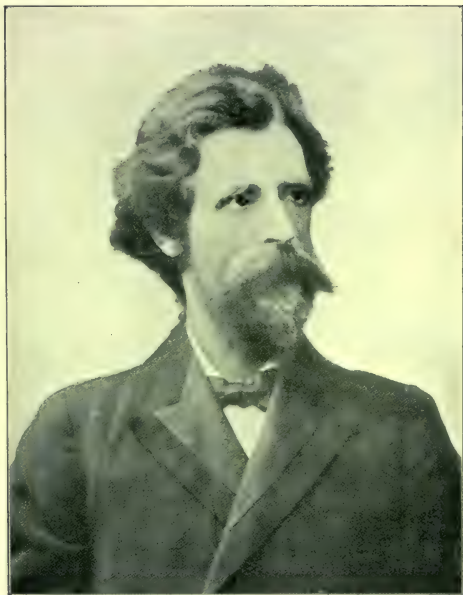
He works on the Stradivari and Guarneri model, and also on an original one. The measurements of the original model are as follows :—

Length of body	$14\frac{3}{16}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	$6\frac{3}{4}$ "
" " middle bouts	$3\frac{7}{16}$ "
" " lower bouts	$8\frac{1}{4}$ "
Length of C's	$3\frac{1}{8}$ "
" sound-holes	$3\frac{1}{16}$ "
Depth of lower rib	$1\frac{1}{4}$ "
" upper rib	$1\frac{3}{16}$ "
Distance between sound-holes	$1\frac{9}{16}$ "

The outline is bold and assertive, and the arching is moderately pronounced. The scroll, although original, is much in the manner of Joseph (Del Gesù). The button is well designed, but a trifle more circular than that of Strad's. The corners are full and piquant, and when viewed in conjunction with the widened waist, they give the instrument a breadth of conception. The sound-holes also are original; they are beautifully cut with a firm hand, and are a sort of compromise between those of Strad and Joseph.

The varnish is an oil one, of the maker's own composition. Colour: golden amber with a rose flush. The tone is strong, bright, and bell-like.

When Mr. Briggs works as a copyist, he may be said to be



J. W. BRIGGS, GLASGOW

a member of the Vuillaume school, except in the matter of artificially seasoning the wood. His copies of some of the classical violins are, indeed, very fine and correct—too correct, perhaps. It is questionable whether the time spent in copying every little scratch and patch be time profitably spent. A facsimile copy, like that of Mr. Briggs' Paganini-Joseph, requires immense skill and patience, and it also requires a length of time. To exercise the greatest skill and patience is commendable, but to consume over-much valuable time is against the interests of the art. The fiddle world cannot afford to allow a born artist to dally with scratches and patches.

Mr. Briggs had the largest exhibit of instruments at the Glasgow Exhibition, and in many respects the finest. The wood of the backs and ribs was exhibited as timber at the Paris Exhibition of 1880, and also at Vienna in 1890, where it was awarded a gold medal. The bellies were made from wood three hundred years old, taken from an old church in Warsaw, Poland.

As an original worker, Mr. Briggs is remarkably free from conventionality, and allows his genius unlimited liberty. At one moment he worships at the shrine of old Antonio, and at the next he is an uncompromising iconoclast. Genius ever was a mystery. Facsimile label :—

*James W Briggs.
Glasgow. 1889.*

BRISCOE, D., Channel Islands, contemporary. An amateur who has made many instruments, but of whose work I can say nothing, as I have never seen any of it.

BROOKFIELD, EDWARD, & SON, Southport. He worked from 1872 till 1898, in which year, on Nov. 25, he died. The work is now carried on by the son. He made violins and bows, and repaired very extensively. The work

of both father and son is said to be very good, but I have not seen any of it. The son works on the model of Guarnerius, with Stradivari sound-holes. Label, handwritten :—

E. BROOKFIELD,
MAKER,
SOUTHPORT

BROWN, ALEXANDER, Glasgow : 1855–60. Stradivari model. Good work and tone. Label, handwritten :—

ALEX. BROWN, MAKER,
GLASGOW, 1855

BROWN, ANTHONY, London and Australia : 1850–75. Pupil of John Morrison. He did not make many violins, but he was celebrated for his guitars, of which he made a large number both in this country and in Australia. He worked in Rosamond Street, Clerkenwell, and also in Adelaide.

BROWN, JAMES, Spitalfields : 1755–1834. Started violin-making in 1804, under Thomas Kennedy. Ordinary work ; tone fairly good for orchestral purposes.

BROWN, JAMES, Norton Folgate : 1786–1860. Son and pupil of the previous James Brown. He made very many bows, and also instruments after his father's death. The work has much the same characteristics as that of the father.

BROWN, JAMES, London : 1813–34. Son and pupil of the preceding. Made only a few instruments.

BROWNE, JOHN, London : 1730–45. He worked at the sign of the "Black Lion," in Cornhill. He copied Stainer and Amati, and turned out fairly good work as regards appearance, but the tone is hard and metallic.

BUCKMAN, GEORGE HATTON, Dover, contemporary. He was born in Snargate Street, Dover, on Oct. 23, 1845,

and he works *en amateur* at Kearsney. He was educated at a private school in his native town, called the "Dover Collegium," which was then under the tutorship of one Herr Hawkerkamp. He has made very many instruments on the Stradivari and Guarneri models. Some of the Guarneri copies have been made after a fine Joseph which is in the possession of C. M. Gann, Esq., of Canterbury, and they are in every way excellent instruments. The Strad copies are of rather full dimensions, some being $14\frac{1}{4}$ in. long. In the latter the greatest width across the upper bouts is $6\frac{5}{8}$ in., and that across the lower bouts $8\frac{3}{8}$ in. full. The height of the sides in a specimen I examined was $1\frac{1}{4}$ in., diminishing to $1\frac{5}{16}$ in., but in the majority it is maintained at $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. throughout.

The C openings are 3 in. from corner to corner, and the sound-holes $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. from wing-angle to wing-angle. These latter, together with the scroll, form the *crux* of the imitator's art. They form also the two abutments of the asses' bridge in fiddle-making. Suffice it to say that Mr. Buckman has crossed this bridge in a chariot drawn by a strong contingent of the Naiadian nymphs. He stoops to imitate, but stoops to conquer at the same time. His is not the servile imitation so frequently observed even in high-class work of the modern French school. It is the imitation which produces the salient points and which also bears the impress of originality. In his sound-holes (I speak now of those in his Joseph copies), Buckman has succeeded in *creating* through and in spite of imitation.

The Gothic quaintness of the master is there, but it is gently toned down by the graceful sweep of the outer line. The same might be said of the scroll. Joseph's scrolls are sometimes described as being of the "bull-dog" type. Buckman's copies have the "bull-dog" face also, but minus a great deal of the usual ferocity.

Some years ago, a MS. of the Federal Constitution of the United States was so written that, when held at a distance, the shading of the letters and their arrangement showed the countenance of George Washington, but close at hand it looked like a copy of the fundamental law of the United States—

that is, the face of the Father of his country and the laws of the great Constitution were represented by one and the same thing. So in Mr. Buckman's work. View it broadly, and you see the sign-manual of the living artist; view it closely, and you discover the dicta of the great classical epoch.

Several of this maker's instruments are made with a slab back. In one of these the archings are rather flatter than usual, owing to the wedge from which the back was cut being somewhat thin, but the "correct" cubic capacity is maintained, and the tone is both large and brilliant. In nearly all the instruments with a slab back, the curl of the maple runs at an angle of forty-five degrees to the longitudinal axis, giving a very pretty effect to the whole.

Mr. Buckman has played the violin from his youth, but he now suffers from nerve-deafness, and loses during its recurring attacks all perception of melody. Facsimile label :—

GEO. H. BUCKMAN,
DOVER, 1899.

C

CAHUSAC, ——. Nothing known of him except that he was associated with the sons of Benjamin Banks for some little time.

CALOW, WILLIAM, Nottingham, contemporary. He was born on June 6, 1847, at Tansley, near Matlock, Derbyshire, and is the son of Thomas Calow, who was also an occasional violin-maker. He makes violins, violas, and double-basses on the Guarnerius model, and repairs extensively. He is assisted by his son Thomas, but the greater part of the work is personal. He uses oil and spirit varnishes. Colours : orange

and nut-brown. His double-basses are well made, and possess a large and fine tone. Facsimile label :—

*No. 10
Made by
W. C. Calow
Nottingham
1880*

CANNON, JAMES, Dumfries : 1855. He was born at Plascow, Kirkcudbrightshire, and is still working as an amateur. He works on the Stradivari model and turns out nice instruments. I have seen only one, which was well made, and varnished with Whitelaw's amber varnish. The tone is of average merit. Label, handwritten in Gothic letters :—

J. CANNON,
DUMFRIES, 1889

CARR, JOHN, Falkirk, contemporary. He was born at Berwick-on-Tweed, May 14, 1839. He is a pupil of Robert Harvie and James Thompson. He has made about sixty violins and one violoncello, all of excellent workmanship and tone. He is established in Falkirk as a maker, music-seller, and teacher of the violin. Varnish : Whitelaw's red. Label :—

JOHN CARR,
MAKER,
FALKIRK, 1898

CARROLL, JAMES, & SON, Manchester, contemporary. He has worked at various places, but is now settled at 103 Great Jackson Street, Hulme, Manchester, and is assisted by his son John, and one workman. He has made about five

hundred instruments of various sizes, and on various models. I have seen only one violin bearing Carroll's own label, but I have seen several of his make bearing forged labels of second and third-rate Italian makers. Who inserted the forged labels into his instruments I cannot say. The violin which I saw was well made, having a brownish-red varnish of fairly good quality and appearance. The wood was good, and the tone round, firm, and free. Facsimile label :—

James Carroll, Maker,
Manchester, Anno 1855

CARTER, JOHN, London : 1780–90. He worked mostly for John Betts, and only occasionally on his own account. He was an excellent maker, and helped considerably to swell the fame of Betts. I have seen one violin of his make, which was on the Amati model, having a beautiful tone. Varnish : golden brown, thinly laid on. Label :—

J. CARTER,
 VIOLIN, TENOR, AND BASS MAKER,
 WYCH STREET, DRURY LANE,
 LONDON, 1785

CARTWRIGHT, W. J., Yeadon, Leeds, contemporary. I have not seen any of his work, and cannot say whether he is an amateur or a professional maker.

CARY, ALPHONSE, London, contemporary. I know nothing of him.

CHALLONER, THOMAS, London ; eighteenth century.

CHANNON, FREDERICK WILLIAM, Plymouth. He works at Portland House, Portland Place, and was born at Totnes in 1862. He was apprenticed early in life to the cabinet-making trade, and made such rapid progress that, at the age of twenty, he became foreman of one of the largest cabinet shops

in Devonport, where he had about thirty men and apprentices under him. At the age of twenty-five he commenced business on his own account, and he was appointed at the same time technical instructor for two classes in carpentry and carving in a local district.

About 1887 he formed the acquaintance of the well-known connoisseur, the late Mr. Francis Codd, and a warm friendship sprung up between them. This resulted in a mutual desire to fashion a fiddle, so Codd imparted to Channon the lore of the art, and Channon initiated Codd into the mysteries of keen-edged tools. Good results were bound to follow genuine enthusiasm of this sort. Channon from a boy had a strong predilection for art and craft. In his early days he exhibited several specimens of fine art cabinet work, and he never failed to secure the highest award.

He has made several violins and a few violas, but unfortunately his time is mostly taken up with repairs. His outline is almost identical with that of the Tuscan Strad, and his arching combines the lines of Strad and Joseph. The principal measurements are :—

Length	14 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	5 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
„ „ middle bouts	4 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
„ „ lower bouts	8 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
Length of sound-holes	3 $\frac{1}{16}$ "
„ C's	3 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
Depth of ribs at bottom	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
„ „ top	1 $\frac{3}{16}$ "

The thickness of the back is $\frac{3}{16}$, diminishing to $\frac{1}{8}$, and the belly is an $\frac{1}{8}$ all over. The ensemble shows breadth of intellectual view. The scroll is beautifully carved, and may be described as "correct and compact." Perhaps the boss of the volute is not brought out to the same piquant prominence as in the work of Stradivari. The corners are sweet and sober—totally different from the average modern copy, which affects *Amatisé* protrusiveness, without possessing *Amatisé* compensating curves. There was much solidity of feeling, and withal grace—

fulness of expression in the quaint and quiet corners of old Maggini. When Stradivari waked Maggini's corners from their slumber, he did all that true art dare do. Many of his imitators have added two pairs of miniature wings to their productions, and their instruments look like flying *odonatas*.

Herein lies the difference between the artist and the copyist. The artist takes hold of any crucial point and is able to modify without "mythifying" it. The mere copyist is the "myth-maker"—a would-be reconciler of contradictories.

Mr. Channon's sound-holes are beautiful conceptions and show the luthier-poet in every line. The margins are full and the edges strong. The latter are not so rounded as is usual in the best work of the modern British school, but they are, nevertheless, very pretty. The wood is of the orthodox kind, and of excellent quality.

The tone is grand and grave, and has something of the inimitable tone of Maggini about it. Nothing can be more divine than the broad, dreamy, weeping, and withal sweet tones of the Brescian *maestro*. The notes drop off the strings like tears trickling down the beard of a weeping god. No virtue ought to be more commended in a modern maker than the passion for combining the sweetness of Amati with the plain-tiveness of Maggini. Facsimile label :—



CHRISTIE, JAMES, Dundee, contemporary. He was born December 1, 1857, at Arbroath. He makes on the models of Stradivari and Guarneri, considerably modified according to his own conception. The workmanship and varnishing are excellent, and the tone is large and brilliant. The plates are left very thick, but carefully graduated.

Christie's instruments will improve in quality with age and use. Label :—

1892,
JAMES CHRISTIE,
VIOLIN-MAKER, DUNDEE

The date is handwritten.

CHRISTIE, JOHN, Kincardine-on-Forth. He died about 1859. He made a large number of instruments on the Amati and Stradivari lines. I have seen some two or three of them, and the wood, workmanship, and tone were excellent. The varnish was a spirit one, but was so thinly laid on that it did not do very material harm. If he had used oil varnish of a good quality, his violins would compare very favourably with the best work of the early nineteenth century. No label ; but one of the violins had the words "J. Christie, maker, 1850" written across the back.

CLARK, JAMES, London : 1770-95. He was a pupil of Matthew Furber, and worked in Turmill Street, Clerkenwell. Average work and tone. No label known.

COLE, JAMES, Manchester ; nineteenth century. He was a pupil of William Tarr, and worked afterwards with George Craske. I have not seen any of his work, and cannot pronounce an opinion ; but old Tarr did not entertain a very high opinion of his abilities. He used a label in his early work, but later stamped "S. Cole" inside on the back.

COLE, THOMAS, London : 1670-90. He made lutes and viols chiefly, and it is not certain that he made any violins. One or two tenors of his have been seen, the tone of which was reported to be large and telling. Various labels.

COLLIER, SAMUEL, London : 1740-60. He worked at "Corelli's Head," London Bridge. I have seen one violin of his make, on the Stainer model, varnished dark yellow, with a small, husky tone.

COLLIER, THOMAS, London ; about 1775.

COLLINGWOOD, JOSEPH, London : 1750-70. He worked at the "Golden Spectacles," London Bridge, and made many instruments on the Stainer, and a few on the Amati model. The workmanship is fairly good, and the tone of average merit. Label :—

JOSEPH COLLINGWOOD,
LONDINI, 1758

COLLINS, WILLIAM HENRY, London, contemporary. He works at 21 Poland Street, W., and was born in the parish of Marylebone in 1860, being the second son of Daniel Joseph and Merina Collins. He was educated at the Portland British Schools, studied music from 1879 to 1881, and entered the Polytechnic Institute in 1882 as a student in painting and drawing. In 1885 he was awarded the Queen's prize and certificate in these subjects by the Kensington Science and Art Department. He was brought up to his father's calling—that of surgical instrument maker, and became a skilled workman in pearl, ivory, tortoiseshell, silver, gold, and other materials. In 1890 he was possessed with the desire to make violins, and he devoured all the books that were obtainable on the subject of the construction of the king of instruments, and he also carefully examined and measured very many fine fiddles. In 1897 he was married to Jessie Emma, youngest daughter of George and Sarah Searles. In 1900, after an extended study of about ten years on the subject, he put into practice his theory of violin-making. Since then he has made seven instruments.

He works on the Strad model, but the measurements are in a few instances slightly modified, as will be seen from the following figures :—

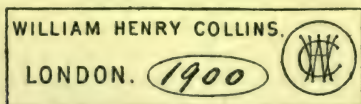
Length . . . . .	. . . . .	14 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	. . . . .	6 $\frac{9}{16}$ "
„ „ middle bouts	. . . . .	4 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
„ „ lower bouts	. . . . .	8 $\frac{1}{8}$ "

Length of C's	.	.	.	.	.	$3\frac{1}{8}$ inches.
„ sound-holes	.	.	.	.	.	$2\frac{1}{16}$ „
Depth of ribs at bottom	.	.	.	.	.	$1\frac{1}{4}$ „
„ „ top	.	.	.	.	.	$1\frac{1}{8}$ „
Distance between sound-holes at top	.	.	.	.	.	$1\frac{5}{8}$ „

In one specimen examined by me the Strad outline was considerably modified in the inner bouts. The arching is flatter, especially in the front table. The scroll is excellently carved and in the spirit of the *maestro*, but the sound-holes are a sort of compromise between those of Anthony and Joseph (Del Gesù). The purfling is beautifully inlaid, but is rather too near the edge in some examples, where it is just a trifle under one-eighth. The edge is full and nicely rounded. On the whole, the workmanship is excellent and in splendid taste. The varnish is an oil one of Mr. Collins' own composition—the result of numberless experiments. It has for basis fossil amber. It is very elastic and transparent, and it does not soften, chip, or crack. It is made in one colour, orange red, which is quite permanent.

The wood is of the orthodox kind and very good in quality. The tone is powerful and penetrating.

Mr. Collins has repaired a great number of instruments, hence the slow production of new ones. He has obtained two certificates of merit and three prize medals. He makes only violins, and his price is fifteen guineas. Facsimile label:—



COLVILLE, DAVID, Cupar : 1845–85. He made excellent instruments on the models of Amati and Stradivari. I saw and tried one of his Amati copies some years ago. The wood was beautifully figured, and the tone sweet and silvery. He was a born artist, and had he led a less chequered career he would have turned out still better work. He visited New

Zealand, Canada, and Australia by turns, and never seemed to settle down in one place or at one thing long. No label, but written in pencil across back:—

DAVID COLVILLE,

1857

COLVIN, GAVIN, Sunderland, contemporary. He was born in Lerwick, Shetland, in 1841. About fifteen years ago he was fortunate enough to have a genuine Stradivari violin brought to him for repairs, and all his instruments from that time on are copies of this violin. Previous to that he had made many instruments on an original model, with a rather pronounced arching. The workmanship is good, and the tone is moderately powerful and of a good quality. He uses both spirit and oil varnishes. Label, handwritten:—

GAVIN COLVIN,

MAKER,

SUNDERLAND, A.D. 18—

CONWAY, WILLIAM, London: 1745–50.

COOPER, HUGH WILLIAM, Glasgow, contemporary. He was born Aug. 30, 1848, and is the son of William and Margaret Cooper. He manifested a great interest in the manufacture of musical instruments at an early age. At sixteen he made a small harmonium, and some years later he built a two manual pipe organ with pedals.

His first violin was made seven years ago, and for the last five years he has been engaged professionally as a violin-maker.

He has made, up to the present, fifty-four violins, on the models of the "Sainton," Strad, and Joseph (Del Gesù), from drawings published by Mr. William C. Honeyman.

In some instruments the measurements of the "Sainton" copies are slightly modified, as will be seen from the following figures:—

Length of body	.	.	.	.	.	14 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	.	.	.	.	.	6 $\frac{21}{32}$ "
" " middle bouts	.	.	.	.	.	4 $\frac{15}{32}$ "

Width across lower bouts	$8\frac{1}{4}$ inches
Length of C's	$3\frac{1}{8}$ "
Length of sound-holes	$3\frac{3}{8}$ "
Distance between sound-holes at top	$1\frac{1}{8}$ "
Depth of ribs at bottom	$1\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " top	$1\frac{3}{16}$ "

Mr. Cooper uses excellent wood, which is well-seasoned. He cuts his back on the various methods, according to the nature of the wood. He has a decided preference for close-grained pine. In some instances the "reed" is of uniform distribution, and about one thirty-second in width.

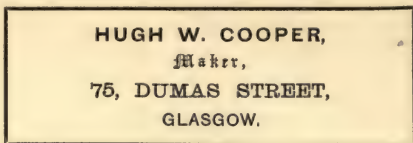
The workmanship is excellent. The scroll is thrown with a firm, florid hand. In matter of detail, it is strictly conventional, except that the first turn starts from a point opposite the apex of the volute and leaves the boss very suddenly. In effect, the scroll is novel and picturesque.

The button is feminine—perhaps a trifle too much so, because everything else about the Cooper fiddle is of a masculine conception. It forms exactly three-fourths of a circle, and is rather under medium size. The sound-holes are original in outline and position. Near the upper turns they are perceptibly drawn towards the inner bouts. This gives the portion of the table between them a sense of solidity and boldness. They are set nearer the edge than was customary with Strad. Their position is a sort of a compromise between the Strad and the Bergonzi sound-holes.

The purfling is evidence of Mr. Cooper's thorough mastery of the tools of the craft. And here, in the fine finish of matters of detail, one is reminded that the maker is a trained jeweller and watchmaker, as well as a violin-maker.

The margin is one-eighth wide, and the edges nicely rounded. The latter are not so substantial as is usually the case in modern British work. A strong, rounded edge is the sign-manual of the modern British school, and when one occasionally comes across another method, the result is all the more noticeable. The varnish is Whitelaw's light, and dark

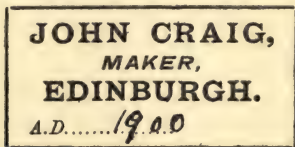
brown, well laid on, and beautifully polished. The tone is firm, bright, and penetrating. Facsimile label :—



CORSBY, GEORGE, London; eighteenth century. Principally a dealer, but made a few instruments on the Amati model of average merit.

CORSBY, —, Northampton : 1780. Double-basses.

CRAIG, JOHN, Edinburgh, contemporary. He was born Nov. 17, 1860, at Myreside, Kirkinch, Forfarshire. He was apprenticed at an early age to the wheelwright trade. In 1890 he came to Edinburgh, where he works as a joiner. Although only an amateur violin-maker, his work is excellent. Wood, workmanship, and tone give him a place in the front rank of modern Scottish makers. His model is original, approximating to that of Stradivari. The scroll is beautifully carved, and the plates are thick in wood. Varnish : White-law's "Amati" colour, laid on in thin coats and perfectly polished. It is a pity Craig does not turn out more instruments, as they are certainly of sufficient merit to justify his doing so. Facsimile label :—



CRAMOND, CHARLES, Aberdeen : 1800-33. A prolific maker, much of whose work is of considerable merit.

He worked on an original model, with plates rather highly arched. The wood is usually of good quality, though sometimes poor and plain in figure. The varnish is a spirit one, hard and dry, but thinly laid on. Colour : dark yellow to dark brown. The tone is not over strong, but it is clear, sweet, and penetrating. He left many of his instruments too thin in wood, and these have not improved with age and use. Label :—

CHAS. GRAMOND,
MAKER,
ABERDEEN, 1815

CRASKE, GEORGE, Bath, Birmingham, Stockport, and elsewhere ; about 1791–1889. Craske, although his father was a foreigner, was of English extraction, so he once told my grandfather, who was a fiddle enthusiast. He said that an ancestor of his named Cross had settled in Russia, and afterwards in Germany, and the present form of the name was due to these migrations. Mr. George Crompton, who was intimately acquainted with this wonderful man, does not say anything about the matter in his sketch of him in the June number of *The Strad*, 1893. However, on the strength of this statement, I venture to include him here as a British maker of British blood. He was not an Anglo-German or French, but a thorough Britisher in character and sentiment. And so is his work. Out of the three thousand odd instruments that he is said to have made, I have seen only about a dozen—that is to say, only about a dozen that I knew to be his work. But very many of his instruments have a forged label in them, and as he made very fair imitations of Joseph Guarnerius and other Italians, his work is not always recognised. I cannot say that there is anything about Craske's work to excite ecstatic utterance. However clever the workmanship may be—and in much of his work we may concede that it is clever—the tone will never give him a seat amongst the mighty : it is too hard and metallic. I have carefully tried the specimens which from time to time have been brought to my notice, and I must honestly say that I have

always been disappointed with the tone. It is a large, round, and piercing tone, but it lacks unction. It is stronger than the tone of any of our classical makers, but will not for a moment bear comparison as regards mellowness and sweetness. Craske's instruments are splendidly adapted for orchestral purposes, but as solo instruments they are never likely to be in great demand. In some catalogues of old instruments issued recently I find that there are specimens of his work offered at £30. This sum is more than double the intrinsic value of anything I have seen by him. The workmanship, however, is honest and solid, and we must give Craske his due that he never attempted to sell his clever imitations as originals.

Craske was a pupil of "old Forster," and he made many instruments for Clementi and for Dodd, the bow-maker. Besides copying Guarnerius, he made several copies of Amati and Stradivari, from templets and measurements taken from a Strad and an Amati in the possession of Sir Patrick Blake, of Langham Hall, Suffolk. Whilst in Birmingham, he is reported to have been once engaged by Paganini to do some repairs to his violin, which had met with an accident.

Craske lived in Salford, amongst other places, where he worked for about twenty years, leading the life of a recluse, allowing no one to enter his workshop except Mr. George Crompton, his friend and successor in business. He lived a retired life for some years before he died, at Bath, in affluent circumstances. He died in November 1889, at the advanced age of ninety-eight. He was a man of striking appearance and personality. "His head was exactly the same shape and measure as Shakespeare's, and his memory one of the most remarkable that ever was known"; such are the concluding words of Mr. Crompton's biographical sketch.

CROSS, NATHANIEL, London : 1700-51. Some suppose that he was a pupil of Stainer, but this is a mere conjecture. His instruments, although made on the Stainer model, are a sufficient proof that he had never received a

day's training in the great workshop at Absam. From 1700 to 1720, when he entered into partnership with Barak Norman, they are rather plain and tasteless, large and highly arched, with short, blunt corners—in fact, his work is in dangerous proximity to the Stainer caricature. From 1720 on the work improves and approaches more nearly to the lines of the German model. This is contrary to the rule. If he had been a pupil of Stainer, we should naturally have expected to see the more correct copies dating from the early years of his career, and work showing departures or originality dating later. He never got rid of the exaggerated fluting round the edge, and the tone is consequently rather small and feeble. His fine cutting of the scroll shows what he was capable of if he had had a better ideal. The varnish is soft, and of a light brown to light yellow hue. He marked his instruments on the back inside with his initials, with a ✠ above. After he entered into partnership with Norman the label runs:—

BARAK NORMAN AND NATHANIEL CROSS,
AT THE BASS VIOL IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD,
LONDON, FECIT 172-

CROWTHER, JOHN, London: 1750-1810. He worked in Houghton Street, Clare Market, and occasionally for John Kennedy. He followed the Stainer and Amati models. The workmanship is of average merit, but the tone is fairly good. Varnish: dark amber, which is now turned almost black. Label:—

JOHN CROWTHER,
FECIT, LONDON, 1786

CUMMING, ANDREW, Portpatrick, contemporary.
Fifth-rate work.

CUTHBERT, —, London: seventeenth century. A maker of viols and violins. I do not know his work.

D

DALGARNO, THOMAS, Aberdeen : 1860-70. Workmanship of good average merit, and the tone fairly good. The instruments are left rather thin in wood, and the tone will not therefore continue to improve. Label, handwritten :—

THOMAS DALGARNO,
ABERDEEN, 1865

DAVIDSON, HAY, Huntly : 1860-75. Rather poor work, with a loud, harsh tone.

DAVIDSON, PETER, Forres : 1834-86. He was born at Speyside, and he lives now at Lonsville, White County, Georgia, U.S.A. He was only an amateur maker, but made very fair instruments. He published "The Violin : Its Construction Theoretically and Practically Treated," a very interesting but wholly unreliable work. Davidson was an excise officer, and a bookworm.

DAVIDSON, WILLIAM, Edinburgh, contemporary. He was born at Muckhart, Perthshire, in 1827. He follows the model of Stradivari, and his work is of good average merit. He received a second-class diploma at the Glasgow East End Exhibition, 1890, for a case of violins.

Label, handwritten :—

WILLIAM DAVIDSON,
EDINBURGH, 1896

DAVIS, RICHARD, London : 1775-1836. He was for some time in the employ of Norris & Barnes, and in 1816, at the death of Norris, he succeeded to the business. He did not make many instruments himself, but employed others to work for him. He carried on a very considerable trade in old instruments. The few violins he made are not on any particular model—they perhaps resemble the Stradivari model

more than anything else—are indifferently made, and have a piercing, Stainer-like tone. Varnish : spirit, of a dark brown colour. He retired towards the end of his life, and left the business to William Davis. He died in Bussage in 1836, and was buried in the Bisley churchyard.

DAVIS, WILLIAM, London : about 1790–1850. Cousin and successor to the preceding Richard Davis. Did not make many instruments. I have not seen any of his work. He employed Charles Maucotel and others to work for him. He sold the business in 1846 to Edward Withers, and retired to Bussage.

DAY, JOHN, London : eighteenth century. He copied the Italian instruments closely, and succeeded in producing a good tone.

DEARLOVE, MARK, Leeds : 1810–20. He made one or two nice copies of a Stradivari violin, but the tone was indifferent.

DEARLOVE, MARK WILLIAM, & CHARLES FRYER, Leeds : 1828–65. Dearlove employed others to work for him, such as Gough, Absam, Fryer, &c. The last named he eventually took into partnership with him, and the instruments which bear their joint-label are fairly well made, on various models, but mostly on the Strad, with a round, stinging tone. One instrument of theirs which I tried some years ago had a clear and penetrating tone, with much of the characteristics of the Stainer tone about it. Label :—

DEARLOVE AND FRYER,
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MANUFACTURERS,
BOAR LANE, LEEDS, 1836

DELANY, JOHN, Dublin : 1795–1810. Followed the Amati model, and was very successful in producing a good tone. I saw one of his violins many years ago in Waterford, which was well made, rather small, and had a clear and sweet

tone. The back was cut on the slab of plain wood, and unpurpled. The sound-holes were rather short and wide, and the corners a little blunt. The varnish, which was originally dark yellow no doubt, had turned nearly black. He used two labels :—

(1) MADE BY JOHN DELANY,
NO. 17, BRITAIN STREET, DUBLIN, 1808

(2) MADE BY JOHN DELANY,
IN ORDER TO PERPETUATE HIS MEMORY IN FUTURE AGES,
DUBLIN, 1808.
LIBERTY TO ALL THE WORLD, BLACK AND WHITE

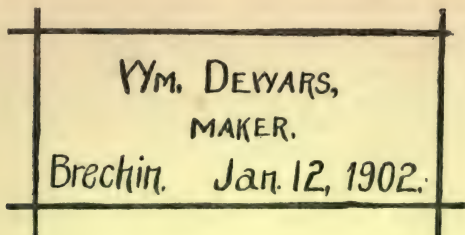
DENNIS, JESSE, London : 1795–1860. Pupil of John Crowther, and for some time workman to Matthew Furber. I do not know his work, and have never seen it described.

DEVEREUX, JOHN, Melbourne. Before he emigrated he worked for some time with B. Simon Fendt.

DEVONEY, FRANK, Blackpool and Canada, contemporary. He is an ingenious man, and was originally a tailor. He makes on an original model. The only instrument of his make which I have seen was not finely made, but it was strongly built, and had a rough sort of character. It was covered with a reddish amber oil varnish of his own make. The tone was large, but rather shrill. He was born about forty-eight years ago, and is a native of Perth, Scotland. He has lost one limb, but he wears another of his own manufacture.

DEWARS, WILLIAM, Brechin, contemporary. He was born at Brechin, September 10, 1878. He is a young maker of great promise, and already makes good instruments on the Guarneri and Stradivari models. He uses good wood, of a pretty figure, and varnishes with Hardie's or Whitelaw's

varnish. The tone is large and responsive. Facsimile label :—



DICKENSON, EDWARD, London : 1750-90. He worked at the "Harp and Crown" in the Strand. Inferior work on the Stainer model.

DICKESON, JOHN, London and Cambridge : 1750-80. An instrument of his make on the Amati model was owned by a Mr. Jenner, in Bath, a few years ago. It had very pretty wood, light brown varnish, and a sweet, silvery tone. It was rather weak on the fourth string, but clear and responsive on the two upper strings. Label :—

JOHN DICKESON
FECIT IN CAMBRIDGE, 1778

DICKIE, MATTHEW, Rotherham, contemporary. He has made many instruments, some of which are of good workmanship and tone. His varnish is rather soft and inclined to "cake" and crack.

DICKSON, JOHN, London : 1725-60 (?). Probably the same as the John Dickeson noticed above.

DICKSON, GEORGE, Edinburgh, contemporary. A doctor, and a clever amateur, who is also the discoverer of "Dickson's varnish."

DITTON, —, London : about 1700. Mention is made of a violin by him in the list of Tom Britton's collection of musical instruments.

DODD, EDWARD, Sheffield and London : 1705-1810. He died in London at the extreme old age of 105. He lived in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, and was buried in St. Bride's Churchyard. He made much improvement upon the form of bow in use in this country before his time.

DODD, JOHN, London : 1752-1839. He was born in Stirling, died in Richmond workhouse, and was buried at Kew. He is styled "The English Tourte," and much of his work justifies the title. Had he lived a more virtuous life, he probably would have turned out work of uniform excellence. Many of his bows were evidently made in haste, and sold for a few shillings, to meet the exigencies of an empty cupboard and a parching thirst. His intemperate habit was the cause of many troubles to himself, and to others who interested themselves on his behalf, and he came nigh the last stage of starvation many a time. Had it not been for the kindly offices of Dr. Sellé and Mr. Richard Platt, of Richmond, he would have ended his days on the roadside ; as it was, he ended them in the workhouse.

He was the pupil of his father, the Edward Dodd previously noticed, and he improved so much upon the work of his father, and upon everything else in the whole of the violin world (excepting the work of his greater contemporary, François Tourte), that his bows have maintained an undiminished celebrity down to our own days. His method of cutting his bows was primitive, and it has not been adopted by any great maker since his time. He cut the bow in the curved form out of the block, and dispensed with the ordinary plan of cutting it straight and bending by heat. I have seen a large number of Dodd bows, and I am convinced from a close examination of them that they have all been cut in this manner. One of the finest specimens which I have seen is now in the possession of the Rev. J. Rhys Jones, Priest-in-charge,

Maesteg, Glamorganshire. It is a fine stick, with a graceful *cambre* and good balance. Its length is exactly $28\frac{1}{4}$ in., and the length of the hair $25\frac{1}{8}$ in. It is of medium weight, and very dark in colour. The face of the heel is decorated with mother-of-pearl, and the ferrules are of thick silver. Dodd's name was stamped on all sorts of wretched nondescripts in the middle of last century, and his fame suffered considerably in consequence. But his work has suffered more than his fame, for there are hundreds of mongrel "Dodds" about, some with genuine heels, others with genuine heads, and not a few patched up in divers manners. The owner of a genuine Dodd, of regulation length, or anything near it, and made in his best style, has a treasure that he can well be proud of.

DODD, THOMAS, London : 1786-1823. He was the son of Edward Dodd of Sheffield, previously noticed. He did not make many instruments himself, but he employed very clever workmen to do so for him. He was first of all a bow-maker in Blue Bell Alley, Mint Street, Southwark, and in 1798 he became a violin-maker and dealer, opening a shop in New Street, Covent Garden, and moving in 1809 to St. Martin's Lane, Charing Cross. Later on he added another sail to his craft, and became a harp and pianoforte maker. The instruments which bear his label are mostly the work of John Lott and Bernard Fendt, two excellent workmen. Dodd's genius, however, brooded over them whilst fashioning these magnificent instruments, like a mighty spirit brooding over the formless void. He was an enthusiastic connoisseur, with a heart and mind steeped in Italian lore, and he brought his knowledge to bear upon the work at every turn. It is impossible to say how much of the work beyond the varnishing was his own—probably no more than the determining of the thicknesses. With two such clever men to carry out his instructions, there was no occasion for him to handle the gouge and chisel. When the instruments were ready "in the white," Dodd overhauled them carefully and then varnished them with his own hands. His varnish is excellent—quite equal to that of Benjamin Banks—and he applied it most

skilfully. It ranges in colour from golden amber to deep golden red, and it is rich and transparent. He regarded it as a secret, and was very careful to let no one see him mix or apply it. The ingredients, however, were only the well-known principal gums of the day, mixed in better proportions and more correctly than was customary then. Indeed, most of the varnishes of the early part of last century were hard, inelastic spirit varnishes, and Dodd's oil mixture showed to great advantage by contrast with them. Instruments bearing Dodd's label are of various models: Stradivari, Guarneri, Amati, Stainer, &c., and are of uniform excellence as regards workmanship and tone. I tried one of them quite recently, which was on the grand Strad pattern, with a beautiful scroll, but with sound-holes which were a sort of compromise between those of Strad and Joseph. The back was cut on the slab, and the maple had a broad "flame," which seemed to curl and burn up the varnish with every movement, as if fanned by a breeze inside the instrument. The tone was not so large as one would naturally expect from the dimensions of the violin, but it was firm, free, and mellow.

Dodd has been severely criticised by some writers respecting his rather exuberant confidence in his varnish. But what maker is there that has not overweening confidence in his own varnish? I have not yet come across one maker, be he a first- or fifth-rate, who does not think *his* varnish the best. Dodd had the courage of his convictions, and that is about all that he is guilty of. Hart says that Dodd gained such reputation in his lifetime that he was able to command from £40 to £50 for a violoncello. This is remarkable, and the more so when we consider that they do not fetch much more in our own times. Dodd 'cellos have been knocked down at public auction for £32, £34 10s., and £35 as recently as 1897. His violins, when in fine condition, realise proportionately high prices. Labels:—

(1)

T. DODD,

VIOLIN, VIOLONCELLO, AND BOW MAKER,
NEW STREET, COVENT GARDEN

(2)

DODD, MAKER,
92, ST. MARTIN'S LANE

Perfect copies of Stradivari, Amati, Stainer, &c.

Note.—The only possessor of the recipe for preparing the original Cremona oil varnish.

DODD, EDWARD & THOMAS, London : 1830–43. Pupils of Bernhard Fendt. Thomas died early, and Edward was accidentally drowned, April 29, 1843. Had Thomas Dodd lived he would in all probability have become an excellent maker.

DORANT, WILLIAM, London : 1800–20. He worked at 63 Winfield Street, Brick Lane, Spitalfields. Average work and tone.

DUFF, WILLIAM, Dunkeld : 1810–82. A game-keeper on the Athole estate, and an amateur maker. Indifferent work, poor varnish, but fair tone. Label :—

MADE BY WM. DUFF,
PULNEY COTTAGE,
DUNKELD, 1866

DUKE, RICHARD, London : 1750–80. Unfortunately there are no biographical particulars of this great man, and no evidence as to his character and personality other than that furnished by his remains. He worked on the Stainer and Amati models. Miss Stainer, in her "Dictionary of Violin-Makers," says that he also made copies of Stradivari, but I have never seen any of these copies, nor heard of undoubtedly genuine ones. Counterfeit Strad modelled Dukes there are, I have not the least doubt, as there are counterfeit "nobody" Dukes by the hundred. It has been said that "imitation is the sincerest form of flattery," if so, Duke is the most sincerely flattered maker of the British classical school. His fame was greater in the eighteenth century than was that of even Banks. The reason for this is not far to seek ; he made the best copies of Stainer that were ever

produced in this country, and as Stainer was the ruling idol, the instruments which most truly approached his lines would naturally have the pre-eminence. In this way Duke got his laurels. And once a name is made it requires but the exercise of a little discretion to keep it up. The Duke cult was in its heyday when Banks and Forster were turning out their best Amati copies. Richard's bias was towards the German model, and he did not copy the Italian model as often nor as felicitously as he might have done. The sound-holes are faithful to the original in the Stainer copies, and they are strongly reminiscent of the same prototype in the Amati copies. Not that he put inferior work into the latter, as Banks was doing when copying Stainer; on the other hand, his workmanship is always fine, whether copying Amati or Stainer; but he drank more deeply of the German spirit than he did of the Italian. In the opinion of connoisseurs of to-day the Amati copies may be the more valuable, but there is not the slightest doubt that Duke and his patrons did not share the same view. His patrons were mostly rich people and county families. I am familiar with seventeen Duke violins and tenors which are now in the possession of English and Welsh county families, and have at different times examined and tried several of them. The pedigree of the majority of these can be traced back to the time of purchase. One of the most noted of them is the "Cresselly Duke," a beautiful violin on the Stainer model. It was the property of the late S. P. Allen, Esq., of Cresselly, who came into the possession of it through his wife, the daughter of the fourth Earl of Portsmouth. The fiddle had been in the Portsmouth family since the days of the second Earl, who purchased it himself of Duke in the year 1768. Mr. Fleming expresses the belief that genuine Duke instruments are extremely rare. I am strongly of the opinion that there are more genuine "Dukes" in existence than there are "Banks" and "Forsters" put together, but they are not to be found in dealers' shops. They are fossilizing in dust heaps in the garrets of county mansions. There were hundreds of fine amateur players amongst the



Photo. A. & G. Taylor

VERY FINE VIOLA BY RICHARD DUKE

(Fecit 1768)

gentlefolk of those days, when the facilities for attending music-halls, opera-houses, &c., were so few and far between. The finest specimens of Duke are not a whit inferior to those of Banks, except as regards model and varnish, and in one particular, at least, they are even superior, viz. in the carving of the scroll, but this remark applies only to the very finest of them. Duke was a busy man, and he did not always have the time at his command to do his best. Banks and Forster worked more at leisure, and the former of the two was helping to create the taste for better things, which always has a modifying effect upon the relation between supply and demand. I do not understand how it has come to be said that Duke's Stainer copies are not quite so good as his Amati copies. I submit that they are as good *per se*, and better as *copies*. Duke was too thoroughly imbued with Stainer ideas to admit of his making instruments in the true Italian spirit. There is no perceptible difference in the tone, be the work Italian or German in character. It is a round, ringing, ravishing tone in either case. It has not the remotest affinity with the tone of Stainer, nor is it like the tone of Banks, which is more subdued, mellow, and sweet. The tone of Duke as compared with that of Banks is brighter and has more *vibrato* in it. Tone nuances are very hard to analyse in words, but easily differentiated by the cultivated ear.

Duke's varnish is elastic, soft, and transparent, but it lacks unction. There is an air of aristocratic refinement about it which is quite unmistakable, but we long for one sweet blush of the emotions. If I were asked to give an imaginary pen picture of Duke, I should describe him as a well-built man, broad-browed, keen-eyed, dignified and reserved in bearing, with a very correct but cold taste in matters artistic. That is the sort of man I see in my mind's eye hard at work beside the bench shaping those chaste, sober, broad-chested tenors. Fine specimens of Duke rarely come into the market; when they do, they fetch a fair price. One of the finest violins which I have seen of his make was sold by the Messrs. Hart in the year 1898 for £35. It had choice

wood, light mellow-brown varnish, and a beautiful tone. The instrument was in perfect preservation, and, as prices go, worth double the money. Photographs of this violin are reproduced here. As far as is known Duke had only three pupils, his son Richard, John Betts, and Edward Betts. His violoncellos were never in such demand as his violins and tenors, and they are seldom to be seen nowadays. He often branded his instruments under the button "Duke, London." Labels :—

(1) RICHARD DUKE,
LONDINI, FECIT 1760

(2) RICHARD DUKE,
MAKER,
HOLBORN, LONDON,
ANNO 1768

Both of these were usually written in ink. His printed label ran :—

(3) RICHARD DUKE,
MAKER,
NEAR OPPOSITE GREAT TURN-STILE,
HOLBORN, LONDON

DUKE, RICHARD, London : about 1770–85. Son and pupil of the preceding. The few instruments of his make which remain show that he was inferior to his father as a workman. He branded his violins similarly to his father, and usually left them unlabelled.

DUNCAN, —, Aberdeen : about 1762.

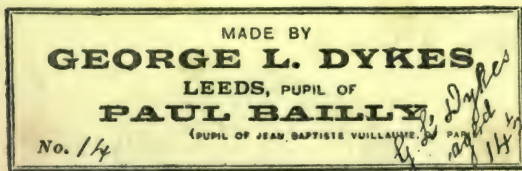
DUNCAN, GEORGE, Glasgow : 1855–92. He was born Jan. 17, 1855, and emigrated to America in 1892. His instruments from about 1883 on are magnificent. They are on the model of Stradivari and Guarneri, varnished with a beautiful oil varnish usually of a golden orange red tint. The wood in some specimens is of a broad figure in the back, and of a medium grain in the front table. The tone is large, rich, and free. He was awarded the gold medal for an exhibit of

two violins at the London Exhibition of Inventions and Music in 1885. These two violins were of a beautiful appearance, though I did not have the pleasure to try their tone. Duncan is a born artist, and his work will improve with age and become valuable. It is to be hoped that his talents will be appreciated on the other side of the Atlantic to the extent they deserve. Label :—

NO. 37

MADE BY
GEORGE DUNCAN,
GLASGOW, 1884

DYKES, GEORGE LANGDON, Leeds, contemporary. He is the son of Mr. Harry Dykes, the well-known violin expert and dealer. He was born on October 11, 1884, and is probably, as will be seen from the date, the youngest fiddle-maker in Britain. He has received a good education, and can speak French and German fluently. He commenced violin-making when he was twelve and a half years of age, and he has finished up to date seventeen violins. All the work is personal; purfling, sound-holes, scroll and all. He is the pupil of his father and of Mons. Paul Bailly. His work is full of promise, and more will be heard of him, no doubt, in years to come. Facsimile label :—



E

EGLINGTON, — : about 1800.

EVANS, RICHARD, Anglesey and London : 1730-50.
I have seen two violins supposed to be by him, in North Wales.

H

I have never seen the instrument by him which is reputed to have the following label in it :—

MAID IN THE PARIS OF ANIRHENGEL
BY RICHARD EVANS, INSTRUMENT
MAKER, IN THE YEAR 1742

For “Anirhengel” Hart reads “Lanirhengel.” I do not think either of the two readings is correct. Probably the true reading would be “Llanfihangel.” Richard Evans was no doubt illiterate, but we will give him credit for a smattering of his native tongue. English people *will* mangle Welsh place names, and create difficulties where none exist. “Abergwynfi,” the romantic little Welsh village where the author lives, is plain and musical enough, but I have often been puzzled to know where I really live when I receive letters from my monoglot Saxon friends with the name spelt in one of the following barbarous ways :—“Abergoynfi,” “Abergynfi,” “Abergwnfi,” “Abergwynff,” &c.

EWAN, DAVID, Cowdenbeath, contemporary. He was born March 4, 1838, at Stoneyhill, near Musselburgh. His work is of good average merit. Stradivari model, and oil varnish of his own composition. The plates are left thick in wood, and the tone is firm and strong without being very refined. Hard playing will no doubt rub off much of the harshness. Facsimile label :—



F

FENWICK, —, Leith. A tenor by this maker was sold at a sale held by Messrs. Patrick & Simpson on May 22, 1901, for £4, 10s. It was said to have a nice tone.

FERGUSON, DONALD, Huntly, Aberdeenshire.

FERGUSON, WILLIAM, Edinburgh : 1790-1820. Very good work and tone. I have not seen any of it, and do not know whether he used a label.

FERRIER, WILLIAM, Dundee, contemporary. Very good work, but plates in some of his instruments are left too thin, and the tone must consequently deteriorate with age. Label :—

W. FERRIER,
DUNDEE.
NO.— 19—

FINDLAY, JAMES, Padanaram : 1815-96. He was born at a farm near Brechin, in Forfarshire. He made about five hundred instruments, mostly violins on the Guarneri model. I have seen only three of his violins, which were on the Stradivari model, one being well-made, of good wood, with a large tone. He made several copies of a very old violin in the possession of Mr. J. Michie, Brechin, and these are said to be his best, both in workmanship and tone. The said old fiddle is on an original model, something between the models of Strad and Joseph, and has a sweet and mellow tone. It is nearly black through oxidation, and is very correctly christened "Black Meg," as it is a fiddle with a character, and deserves a name. It was down here for inspection some two years ago, and both its nationality and parentage are still a puzzle to me. There is a characteristic quaintness about the work of Findlay, as may be inferred from the fact that he copied an unconventional instrument of the type of the old fiddle just named. His wood is mostly plain, and the varnish

usually a spirit one. He had two or three labels; the one in the instruments examined by me ran :—

JAMES FINDLAY,
PADANARAM,
1870

This was handwritten; others are printed.

FINGLAND, S., —, contemporary. I know nothing of him.

FIRTH, G., Leeds: 1830-40. I have not seen his work.

FLEMING, J., —, contemporary.

FORD, JACOB, London: 1780-95. He worked on a model which very closely resembles that of Stainer. He evidently had Stainer in his mind, but he had also seen and handled so many Amati copies, or perhaps a few original "Amatis," that he had become unsettled in his ideals. The workmanship is excellent, and the wood very carefully chosen. The varnish is an oil one, in light or deep amber colour. His margins are wider than is usual in Stainer copies, and the edges are nicely rounded and solid looking. The tone is not a large one, but is almost equal, in one or two instances which have come under my observation, to that of Duke. Altogether Ford was a superior maker, and the few examples of his art which remain to-day should be more highly valued than they are. Label :—

JACOB FORD,
MAKER,
LONDON, 1792

FORSTER, JOHN, Brampton: 1688-1781. The first of this celebrated family to make fiddles. He made only an occasional instrument, on the Stainer model, and the work is rough and unfinished.

FORSTER, SIMON ANDREW, London: 1801-1870. He was the son of William Forster (1764-1824), born May 13, 1801, died Feb. 2, 1870. He worked at Frith Street, and also at Macclesfield Street, Soho. He is more famous as the collaborator with William Sandys of "The History of the Violin" (London, 1864), than as a violin-maker. All his work that I have seen reflects little or no credit upon him. He was a pupil of his father, of his brother, and of Samuel Gilkes. He worked sometimes on the Stradivari model, sometimes on the Stainer, but always arched his instruments in a grotesque manner. I am not sure that he did not sometimes bake his wood, as the tone of some of them is of a wretched character. Label:—

S. A. FORSTER,
 VIOLIN, TENOR, AND VIOLONCELLO MAKER,
 NO. — LONDON

FORSTER, WILLIAM, Brampton: 1714-1801. He was the son of John Forster, and, like his father, made and repaired an occasional fiddle. The workmanship is a little better than his father's, but the tone is about the same. His instruments are unpurpled, and spirit varnished.

FORSTER, WILLIAM, Brampton and London: 1739-1808. He is known as "Old Forster," and is the greatest maker of the family. He was born May 1739, and died Dec. 14, 1808. "Old Forster" may be described as the British type of which Vuillaume was the French antitype, although they were not separated by a great span of years. He was the exact counterpart of the great Frenchman—shrewd, versatile, and worldly-wise. When French players wanted a Stradivari or a Guarneri fiddle, Vuillaume met their demands and sold them those new-old instruments which set the Seine on fire. Similarly, when the British public wanted Stainer copies, or Amati copies, or any other copies, Forster was equal to the occasion, and supplied them with their requirements. The only difference between the two men, apparently, was that the Britisher possessed in addition to the artistic sense

another and sometimes inconvenient sense called "conscience." In all other respects Forster and Vuillaume were similar. Had Forster lived amongst wiser people, that would demand Stradivari copies, his instruments would rank beside those of Vuillaume. Forster was a "Jack of all trades" and master of more than one. By turns a spinning-wheel maker, gun-stock maker, cattle driver, publisher, fiddler—he could manage to eke out an existence at any one of them. As a luthier he rose from being a humble Cumberland repairer to the rank of instrument maker to the Court. He ought to have been the greatest maker of all England, and would have been but for his many-sidedness and the indiscrimination of his countrymen. His artistic work at Brampton was confined to the repairing of old instruments, and the making of an occasional fiddle on the Stainer model. In 1759 he came to London, and after meeting with some reverses, entered the shop of one Beck, of Tower Hill, where he remained for about two years making fiddles. In 1762 he set up at Duke's Court, whence he removed to St. Martin's Lane. From this place he again removed to 348 Strand, where he remained for the rest of his days. He followed three models: (a) Stainer, (b) A. & H. Amati, (c) N. Amati.

He appears to have followed Stainer exclusively from 1762 to 1772, but at the latter date he put aside that model never to take it up again. From 1760 to 1790 the influence of Banks was felt far and near, and British players were awakening to the superior merits of Amati. Forster was still a young man of only thirty-three, and had the better and longer half of his life before him. When he turned his back on the German he was in possession of his full strength and able to swim fast with the flowing tide. It was not so with Duke, who had less than a third of his life to live when the star of Amati appeared on the horizon. Now was Forster's chance.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,

Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

Forster might have reached the broad sea of artistic fame had he not paused by the way. He dallied with the form of



FINE-TONED 'CELLO BY "OLD" FORSTER

(Fecit 1772)

A. & H. Amati, and gave up much time to musical enterprise, which, although profitable both to him and to the public, kept him from looking steadily on. "Beware of the man of one book" is an adage which, slightly modified, is applicable in many ways. If Forster had been a man of one ideal, posterity would have rewarded him by conferring upon him the title which has been given to Banks. As matters stand he must rest content with perhaps a third place on the list. His Stainer copies are very good, but do not compare for finish and tone with, *e.g.*, the instruments of Duke. The Amati copies are much better, being solid and well finished. When copying A. & H. Amati he was at his best as regards workmanship, and the result shows what he was capable of when at his best. But the tone of these copies is rather small and glassy. One beautiful specimen I have seen and tried : it was made of fine wood, with maple of narrow, regular, and well-defined curl, very pretty to look at, and varnished in dark, golden amber. Its principal dimensions were :—

Length of body	13 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	6 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
" " middle bouts	4 $\frac{5}{16}$ "
" " lower bouts	7 $\frac{2}{8}$ "
Width of C's	3 $\frac{3}{16}$ "
Length of f's	2 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
Depth of ribs at bottom	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " top	1 $\frac{3}{16}$ "

His N. Amati copies are very faithful to the original, but are never likely to lend themselves to the wiles of the forger. The same remark applies to the tenors. The violoncellos stand on an altogether higher platform. Here, delicacy of detail is not so absolutely necessary as in the smaller work, and solidity and rugged grandeur show to better advantage. His larger work is of moderately full proportions, not usually so large as the larger-sized violoncellos of Banks. But he varied his model a great deal, sometimes widening the waist, sometimes flattening the upper bouts, and sometimes narrowing the width all over

and lengthening the body. The tone of the violoncellos is excellent, and was greatly appreciated in England previous to the advent of Italian instruments. It will be appreciated still more when we think it worth our while to coax the old veterans out of the sullen silence into which they have been obliged to retire. The world is tolerably free of fraudulent Forster 'cellos. I have not seen any, but have heard of one or two. No doubt there are many genuine "Forsters" still in existence, but quite a host of them disappeared during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The average catalogue price for the violoncellos from 1890 to 1900 is £23. They will command a higher figure in the near future. Those varnished dark amber were preferred in the eighteenth century, but the red ones are more in favour to-day. The amber ones which I have seen were not so well stocked with wood as the red ones. Probably the greater thickness of the latter placed them at a slight disadvantage when new, which is the very reason why they are the better sort to-day. I do not know that it was a rule with Forster to make uniformly in this manner, and to indicate the difference in thickness by a difference in the colour of the varnish. I only point out that so far as my observation goes it was his invariable practice. He is said to have used fossil amber for the basis of his varnish towards the end of his life, in the solution of which he was assisted by Delaporte, a chemist. There is a close resemblance between the said varnish and that manufactured until recently by the Messrs. Caffyn of London. Forster made only four double-basses, three of which were for the private band of George III. Labels :—

(1) WILLIAM FORSTER,
 VIOLIN MAKER,
 IN ST MARTIN'S LANE, LONDON, 17—

(2) WILLIAM FORSTER,
 VIOLIN, VIOLONCELLO, TENOR, AND BOW MAKER

N.B.—The above instruments are made in the best manner and finished with the original varnish ; and a copy of every capital instrument in England may be had.

FORSTER, WILLIAM, London: 1764-1824. "Young Forster," as he has been called, was the son of the great Forster. He was born Jan. 7, 1764, and died July 24, 1824. He maintained to some extent the traditions and reputation of his father, but he failed (or did not try) to maintain the same standard of excellence throughout. His work varies a great deal; some of it is no better than the cheapest of the modern factory noise boxes, and some is fully as good as the best of his father's.

Haweis says there was an erratic vein in the Forster family, which in "old" Forster took the shape of "amazing versatility," but in the younger members degenerated into "speculative eccentricity." I prefer to think of "old" Forster as a genius, and of the sons and grandsons as the offspring thereof. And it is a well-nigh universal rule that the offspring of genius are the shipwreck of genius. Genius, as I conceive it, is the abnormal development of some particular gift or faculty, with the other faculties also sufficiently strong to give it support. The offspring of a genius often show the same gift developed in the same abnormal degree, but they have not the other powers of the mind in the necessary state of health and strength to give it equilibrium; *i.e.* in other words, they have not sufficient ballast. Genius without the accompanying staying powers of the mind is like a vessel without a helm. We have the children of a dozen geniuses living amongst us to-day, nearly all of whom may be recognised as the sons of their fathers, but they are more or less rudderless sails in a stormy sea. It has been often said that the sons of great men elect to walk the quieter paths of mediocre distinction out of consideration for their fathers, but this is said more in charity than in sincerity. No man puts his candle under a bushel without at the same time extinguishing it, and suicide is not sacrifice. I have seen one or two violins by "young" Forster, which were excellent as regards finish and tone, and they had his father's amber oil varnish, thinly laid on and well polished. He made a number of inferior instruments, some unpurpled, and with

two or three coatings of a hard spirit varnish, which he let out on hire. Labels :—

(1) WILLIAM FORSTER, JUN.,
VIOLIN, VIOLONCELLO, TENOR, AND BOW MAKER
1815

(2) WILLIAM FORSTER,
VIOLIN, VIOLONCELLO, TENOR, AND BOW MAKER
TO THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE PRINCE OF WALES AND
DUKE OF CUMBERLAND, LONDON

The number of the instrument, the date, and the abbreviation "jun." were added in handwriting.

FORSTER, WILLIAM, London: 1788-1824. He was born Dec. 14, 1788, and died Oct. 8, 1824. He was a pupil of his father and also of his grandfather, and his work has much the same characteristics as that of the former. He made only about twenty instruments bearing his own label, the others were made for dealers.

FRANKLAND, —, London: 1780-90. He was probably a pupil of one of the Forsters, and he was employed by "young" Forster for some time. Ordinary work and tone. No label known.

FRYER, CHARLES, London and Leeds: 1820-40. He was for some time partner with W. M. Dearlove, of Leeds. I have not seen any of his work.

FURBER, DAVID, London. He was a pupil of John Johnson, and made similar instruments on the Stainer pattern. He was the first member of this numerous family to make violins.

FURBER, HENRY JOHN, London: nineteenth century. Pupil of his father, John Furber. He has made many instruments, several of which I have seen and tried. I cannot say

that I admire either the tone or the workmanship very much. His work has been much praised in some quarters, and Hart says that he has made some excellent instruments. Some modern makers are much addicted to what may be termed "class work"; *i.e.*, they turn out instruments of various qualities, which they arrange according to merit into class A, B, C, &c. I think this is much to be deprecated. Every artist ought always to be at his best, and, so far as his material will allow, should turn out work of uniform excellence. Perhaps it has been my fortune to see only the third-rate work of this Furber.

FURBER, JAMES, London. Eldest son of the elder Matthew Furber. I have never seen any of his work, and am not sure that he was an actual maker.

FURBER, JOHN, London: about 1810-45. He was the third son of Matthew Furber, sen., and a pupil of his father and John Betts. He made a large number of instruments on the grand Amati pattern, and some copies of the "Betts" Stradivari, when that famous masterpiece was in the possession of Betts. His work is excellent in every respect. I quite recently saw one of these copies, and I must say that I considered it a superb example of the copyist's art. The wood of the back was of a broad "flame," with the curl slanting nearly at right angles to the longitudinal axis in the direction of the lower end of the instrument. The varnish was golden red, mellow, tender, and not too thickly laid on. The tone was clear and penetrating, and very fine on the two inner strings. The only part of the work which might be considered to be lacking in depth of feeling was the scroll, which was not quite in the spirit of the master, being somewhat stiff and over masculine. His Amati copies are considerably modified in many instances, and some of them are rather deeply grooved and highly arched, but the tone is almost invariably clear and penetrating. His best violins realise as much as £20 to-day, and they will sell at a still higher figure in years to come. Furber worked for J. Betts at the Royal Exchange, and man y

of the fine instruments which bear Betts' label. His own label is :—

JOHN FURBER, MAKER,
13 ST. JOHN'S ROW, TOP OF BRICK LANE,
OLD ST., SAINT LUKE, 1839

FURBER, MATTHEW, London: 1730–90. He was the son and pupil of David Furber. Very little of his work is known. He died in 1790, and was buried in Clerkenwell Churchyard.

FURBER, MATTHEW, London: 1780–1831. Son and pupil of the preceding. His violins are often advertised in catalogues of old instruments, but I do not remember having even seen any of them. He was buried in the same churchyard as his father.

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GARDEN, JAMES, Edinburgh, contemporary. An amateur, who has only made a few violins.

GIBBS, JAMES, London: 1800–45. It is not certain that he made any instruments on his own account, but he worked for J. Morrison, G. Corsby, and S. Gilkes.

GILBERT, JEFFERY JAMES, Peterborough, contemporary. He is the son of Jeffery and Eleanor Langley Gilbert, and was born in New Romney on Aug. 16, 1850. He is the direct representative of an old Kentish family, one of the most notable members of which, in recent times, was Sir Jeffery Gilbert, whom the learned in the law described as “the accomplished exchequer baron.” He received private tuition till he was about twelve years of age, after which he spent some years at the Crockley Green Grammar School, which was then under the mastership of Mr. Thomas Dalby. Mr. Gilbert is one of the leading makers of modern times, and his workmanship, varnish, and tone give him a place amongst the very select few of the innermost circle of present day makers.



J. J. Gilbert.

Although he has always been of an artistic and musical turn of mind, he was more than twenty years of age before he had any kindly feelings for the violin in particular. Having once caught the infection he was soon in the firm grip of the fiddle "disease." His father in his own early days was an enthusiastic amateur player and maker, and from him he seems to have inherited the practical side of his character. He commenced his early studies quite unaided, as his father did all he could to discourage the budding "Stradivari," intending him for another career; and, living as he was in a small isolated town, there were no opportunities of gaining any knowledge whatever upon the subject.

The purely mechanical part of the work never presented any great difficulty to his hand and eye, but he was not long in recognising the fact that it required something more than an expert use of carving tools to create a masterpiece in tone, and especially was the difficulty of an approximate reproduction of the fine old varnishes realised by him. About this time he made the acquaintance of several connoisseurs in London, notably that of the late Charles Reade, the late George Hart, Mr. Horace Petherick, Dr. John Day, and George Withers, all of whom took a kindly interest in his work, and from time to time gave him useful hints. Mr. Reade was especially interested in his varnish studies, and on the eve of his last departure for the Continent, a short time before his death, had a long chat with him on the "mysteries" of old Cremona. It was at this final parting that Reade spoke to him the cheery words, "Go on, Mr. Gilbert, do not get discouraged, I am sure you will succeed in the end." This was in allusion to the varnish problem.

In 1876, Mr. Gilbert was married to Miss Lily White, in St. John's Church, Peterborough. He has six children, named Jeffery Francis White, Charles Clement, Catharine Eleanor, Leslie Baker, Kate Julia, and Frederick William.

Up to date, Mr. Gilbert has made 166 instruments, comprising six 'cellos, thirty violas and viola altas, and the remainder violins. His aim has always been quality, and not

quantity, and he carefully studies each instrument during its construction.

His models have varied from time to time, and are original, without being vagaries on the one hand or slavish copies on the other.

The measurements of the two violin models, of distinctly different outline, from which he is at present working, are as follows :—

(a) Length of body	14 inches.
Width of upper bouts	$6\frac{1}{2}$ "
" middle bouts	$4\frac{3}{8}$ "
" lower bouts	8 "
{ Width of ribs at bottom	$1\frac{1}{4}$ "
{ Gradually diminishing at top to	$1\frac{3}{16}$ "
(b) Length of body	14 "
Width of upper bouts	$6\frac{5}{8}$ "
" middle bouts	$4\frac{1}{2}$ "
" lower bouts	$8\frac{1}{8}$ "
Ribs same as above.	

Model (a) is shown in the accompanying illustration.

The sound-holes are the same in both models, and are $3\frac{1}{16}$ in. long.

The measurements of the viola model are :—

Length of body	16 inches.
Width of upper bouts	$7\frac{5}{8}$ "
" middle bouts	$5\frac{1}{8}$ "
" lower bouts	9 "
Ribs at bottom	$1\frac{1}{2}$ "
" top	$1\frac{3}{8}$ "

and those of the viola alta :—

Length of body	17 inches.
Width of upper bouts	$8\frac{1}{8}$ "
" middle bouts	$5\frac{3}{8}$ "
" lower bouts	$9\frac{1}{2}$ "

Depth of ribs $\frac{1}{16}$ in. more all over than in those of viola.

The length of sound-holes is identical in both violas and viola altas, and is $3\frac{5}{8}$ in.



Photo. A. F. Healy

VIOLIN BY JEFFERY J. GILBERT, PETERBOROUGH

(Fecit 1903)



His 'cello model is also an original one, and the measurements are :—

Length of body	.	.	.	.	.	29 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
Width of upper bouts	.	.	.	.	.	13 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
„ middle bouts	.	.	.	.	.	9 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
„ lower bouts	.	.	.	.	.	17 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Depth of ribs	.	.	.	.	.	4 $\frac{9}{16}$ "
Length of sound-holes	.	.	.	.	.	5 $\frac{11}{16}$ "

The outline of Mr. Gilbert's instruments is very beautiful, and the curves are as graceful as it is possible for curves to be. The violin scroll is in the best Italian style. The width from boss-edge to boss-edge is $1\frac{9}{16}$ in. The depth of the peg-box at the deepest part is $\frac{1}{8}$ in., diminishing to $\frac{1}{16}$ at the throat.

The scollop is nicely rounded, and projects sufficiently to produce piquancy of expression. The curves of the volute are most delicately scooped at the base, and the flutes at the back of the box give the correct balance in lines of subdued boldness. The button is nearly semi-circular, strong, and in keeping with the contour. The edges are fairly full, not exactly rounded nor yet raised, but turned in a manner that emphasises the extreme outline of the fiddle. The margin was exactly $\frac{1}{8}$ in. wide in the specimens examined by me, and the purfling, which was inlaid beautifully, $\frac{1}{16}$ in. wide. The sound-holes are a masterly conception. In outline they are all but identical with those of Strad ; but not in inclination. The notch is a most interesting detail—I have never seen it made so artistically by any other luthier, whether classical or post-classical. The hollowing out of the lower lip (or wing) is also a noticeable feature, and is in the best Stradivarian style.

The varnish is luscious, brilliant, and transparent. Colours : amber, dark amber, light brown, very dark brown, light red, and deep rich red. In the last-mentioned colour the varnish is of surpassing beauty and excellence. It is beautiful in all the colours, but in describing the deep red, "beautiful" and such-like adjectives are not quite good enough. The varnish

is, of course, an oil one—not “linseed or any other heavy oil, which destroy all that is good in colour, delicacy, and brilliancy”—so Mr. Gilbert informs me. The wood is always acoustically perfect and very handsome. It is mostly cut *sur maille*, though I have seen one specimen in which both tables were whole.

The tone is large, clear, and bell-like, and with age and careful use will develop, no doubt, qualities that may be considered in their sum total as a just combination of the sweetness of Amati and the power of Guarneri.

All the work is personal, and the instruments are numbered consecutively as they are finished, both upon the base of the neck (under the finger-board) and inside on the face of the top block. They have also in addition to the label the artist's autograph on the back.

The prices are :—

Violins	25 guineas.
Violas	”
'Cellos from	45 ”

Mr. Gilbert's instruments have gained the following awards :—“International Exhibition,” Crystal Palace, 1884, Silver Medal (highest award); “International Inventions Exhibition,” London, 1885, Silver Medal; “International Exhibition,” Edinburgh, 1890, Gold Medal.

Facsimile label :—

Jeffery J. Gilbert. Peterborough
Fecit. Anno MDCCCXCIX.

The label is printed on cartridge paper from an engraved block.

GILCHRIST, JAMES, Glasgow : 1832–94. An amateur maker, who was by trade a philosophical instrument maker. He made eighty-six stringed instruments of every description.

The workmanship is very fair, but the work as a whole lacks individuality, and the tone is of a poor quality. Label :—

JAMES GILCHRIST,
GLASGOW, 1892

GILKES, SAMUEL, London: 1787–1827. He was born at Morton Pinkney, Northamptonshire, and died Nov. 1827. His work has been greatly praised by competent judges, and fully deserves to be. He died a comparatively young man, just as he was beginning to give the world the first-fruit of ripened talent. He started work on his own account in 1810, and for the next ten years he followed the lines of Charles Harris. The chief fault of his model of this period is that it is a copy of a copy. Many modern makers commit the same error, and we have to-day in the work of some amateurs copies that are removed from the original to the fifth or sixth degree. This is much to be deplored, as something is lost at each remove, and the result in the long run becomes a caricature. Originality pure and simple is quite a different thing, as in such a case the powers of the mind are unfettered and allowed free display. From 1820 on his work shows improvement in style, and his Amati and Stradivari copies of this period are excellent. He had probably had opportunity about the year 1820 of seeing and closely examining genuine Amati and Stradivari (grand) violins. The characteristics of his early Amati work are: a rather pronounced arching, narrow margins, a somewhat top-heavy scroll, and a very weak button; and of the early Strad copies, rather gaping sound-holes, narrow margins, with a leaning towards the Amati arching, especially between the inner bouts, where there is also a decided groove between the sound-holes and the edge. These defects are nearly altogether eliminated in his latest and best work. The scroll of a Stradivari copy which I saw quite recently was thoroughly Italian in character, and the sound-holes beautifully cut and not too wide. The outline was pure and the arching very graceful. The wood of the back was cut on the quarter, with a curl of regular

and medium width, and the pine was of close grain. The varnish was golden brown in colour, of a good quality and perfectly transparent. The tone was clear, bright, and mellow. It is a great pity Gilkes did not live another twenty years, because it is quite evident that he had just begun on a period of activity in production and accuracy of model. He was the pupil of his relative Charles Harris, and he worked for a few years with William Forster. Label :—

GILKES,
FROM FORSTER'S,
VIOLIN AND VIOLONCELLO MAKER,
34 JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE,
WESTMINSTER

GILKES, WILLIAM, London : 1811-75. He was a pupil of his father, and succeeded to his business in James Street, which he later removed to Dartmouth Street. He made many double-basses and other instruments, which are of ordinary workmanship and tone.

GINTON, R., Cork, contemporary. An amateur maker, who has made a few violins of good workmanship and tone.

GIRVAN, THOMAS, Edinburgh, contemporary. He was born in 1849, and commenced to make violins about thirty years ago. Average work and tone. Label :—

THOMAS GIRVAN,
EDINBURGH,
1870

GLENDAY, JAMES, Padanaram : nineteenth century. Very indifferent work.

GLENISTER, WILLIAM, London, contemporary. He was born on May 16, 1850, at Chenies, Bucks, and

resides now at 23 Beak Street, Regent Street, W. The early years of his life were spent at Watford, Herts, the family having removed there when he was three years of age. His father was a gardener by occupation, and young Glenister also became a gardener on his leaving school, which was at a very early age. He remained among the "flowers, fruits, and trees" till he was twenty-two, when an opening occurred and was offered him in the corn trade. He availed himself of the opportunity, and he has followed that trade ever since, he being now manager of the firm into which he came twenty-seven years ago as apprentice.

It will thus be seen that Mr. Glenister belongs to that class of makers which is termed "amateur"; but he is an amateur in the best and in the original sense of the term. The hobby is to him in very truth a labour of love. The born artist is visible in every line and curve of his beautiful productions. And here it may be remarked that the man whom nature has meant for an artist is certain to exert the force of his personality, be he habited in the guise of an amateur or in that of a professional. The difference between the two classes is not always one of kind, nor of degree, but of sentiment. There is a certain coterie of writers in our midst to-day, who ever pronounces its anathema upon anything by an amateur; it cries—"professional!" and professional must the work be, or nothing. The cry is much on a par with that of old, "*Aut Cæsar, aut nullus.*"

Not very long after he entered the corn trade, *i.e.* on July 3, 1875, Mr. Glenister was married to Jane, daughter of Mr. J. E. Chambers, of Stanstead, Kent, at Willesden Parish Church, Middlesex. In business, he is described as a gentleman actuated by the highest principles; and in the home, as the embodiment of amiability and gentleness.

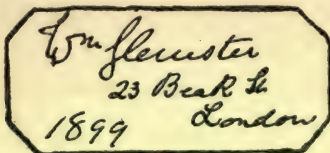
Mr. Glenister works on the lines of Strad, Guarnerius, and N. Amati, but his "divinity" is the greatest of these three, and his prototype the great "Tuscan." His first fiddle was made in 1888, and was the result of a careful study of the masterly work of Mr. Ed. Heron-Allen. Since that

date he has produced sixty violins and one 'cello. All these, with the exception of the first three or four, are fine instruments. The mere mechanical part of the work never offered much trouble to Mr. Glenister, for he ever had an aptitude for making little articles in wood.

The outline of the Strad copies is exactly that of the "Tuscan," and the measurements are the *maestro's* to the *n*th. The model is a trifle flatter and more extended towards the margins, after the style of Maggini. The scroll is bold and masculine. The button is rounded, graceful, and lies evenly with the plane of the instrument. The sound-holes are a slight modification of those of Strad, and placed a shade nearer the edge. They are in perfect keeping, however, with the outline, and the effect, arising from their position and inclination in the subdued arching, is highly artistic. The purfling is inlaid perfectly and without a tremor. The back of one specimen examined by me was whole, the curl running at an angle of thirty degrees to the long axis, *i.e.* in the lower alternate angle of the left side. The "flame" was vivid and fairly broad. In another it was cut *sur maille*, with the curl running "buttonwise." The pine was of close, even grain, and of excellent tonal qualities. Some of Mr. Glenister's best pine has been obtained from an old house in Beak Street, and although it is old and well past the age at which shrinking may be supposed to cease, still he leaves his plates thick and solid.

Mr. Glenister used Whitelaw's varnish on his first efforts, and also Caffyn's; but now he uses a varnish made by Mr. Urquhart, of Derby Street, Mayfair. This varnish gives highly satisfactory results. It is brilliant, transparent, and lasting. It does not chip, and it is tough and elastic. It has that undefinable, unctuous *something* about it, which is not seen every day in varnish except when you are in the goodly fellowship of the holy Cremonese. It is an oil amber one, and made in all the usual colours. Mr. Glenister uses, almost without exception, the golden brown, and the golden red.

The tone is not a large one, but it has splendid qualities; it is delicate, sensitive, and sweet. Facsimile label :—



GLOAG, JOHN, Galston, contemporary. He was born Oct. 24, 1853, in the parish of Riccarton, Ayrshire. His father removed from there to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in Leicestershire, and Gloag was educated at the Ashby Grammar School. Later, the family removed to Galston, where he was apprenticed to a joiner, and he is now employed as estate joiner on the Loudoun estate. All his spare time is devoted to his beloved hobby—violin-making—and he turns out splendid work, both as regards finish and tone. He follows the Stradivari model as shown and described in "Violin-making, as it Was and Is," and he has latterly made several instruments on an original model. He uses Whitelaw's varnish; colour, dark-amber yellow. He obtained the first prize for a case of violins at an industrial exhibition held at Darvel. Price of violins, £5. Facsimile label :—

A facsimile of a signature. It reads "John Gloag" on the first line, "Galston" on the second line, and "Jan - 19 -" on the third line.

GOODMAN, JAMES, Brentford, contemporary. I have not seen any of his work, and do not know whether he works as a professional or as an amateur maker.

GORRIE, J., —, contemporary. I know nothing of him or of his work.

GOUGH, JOHN, Leeds : about 1820. He worked for Mark William Dearlove.

GOUGH, WALTER, Leeds : about 1800-30. Indifferent work and tone.

GOULDING, —, London : about 1790.

GRAY, JOHN, Fochabers : 1860-75. He did not make many instruments.

GREGSON, ROBERT, Blackburn, contemporary. He was born at Whiteberk, near Blackburn, on June 3, 1871. He commenced work as a professional maker in 1898, and his first instruments were very indifferent in workmanship and tone, but he has improved very rapidly, and ought to reach a fair standard of excellence. His one mistake is that he does not copy anybody. If a violin-maker is not endowed with the powers of originality in a high degree, he should not attempt to cut out a path for himself, and even when he feels conscious of rare gifts within, he should devote some years to the exact and careful copying of some old master. Talents must be fed and pruned like fruit-trees in an orchard. Gregson is impatient of detail. The more conspicuous parts of the instrument are carefully handled, but there is a disregard for purity of outline and clean inlaying of the purfle, &c. However, Gregson is a beginner, and may with severe application rectify these errors and become an excellent workman. The tone of the last violin which he made is very good. Facsimile label :—

"Arte et Labore."

ROBERT GREGSON,

BLACKBURN.

ANNO **1898.**

H

HALL, WILLIAM H., Oldham, contemporary. He works at 78 Morris Street, Glodwick, Oldham. He is a good maker, who uses splendid material and varnish. He follows the Stradivari, Guarneri, and Amati models. The tone is not large, but it is bright, responsive, and sweet.

HAMBLETON, JOSEPH, Salford, 1854. I have not seen any of his work, but it is said to be of average merit.

HAMILTON, WILLIAM, Uddingston, contemporary. An amateur maker who has made some first-class instruments. He was born at Anderston, Glasgow, May 5, 1861, and is by profession a consulting engineer. He spent some time in a pattern shop, where he was trained in the use of wood-working tools.

A copy of Gasparo da Salò by him is one of the finest examples of the copyist's art that I have seen—certainly it is the finest Gasparo copy that I have ever examined. The wood in the back of this instrument is superb; the curl being of medium width and of mathematical regularity. The varnish is an oil one; colour, golden orange. The tone is exceedingly powerful, rich, and free.

Another instrument by him was on an original model, which rather exaggerated the proportions of the Brescian model, and was altogether too large, the length being $14\frac{3}{8}$ in.; width across upper bouts $6\frac{7}{8}$ in., and across lower bouts $8\frac{5}{8}$ in. The tone was not correspondingly large; on the other hand, it was of a nasal, viola-like quality, and did not carry. The workmanship is faultless, and careful attention is paid to the minutest detail. The maker should confine his attention to the Gasparo model, as he is evidently in sincere and deep sympathy with it, and shows a better hand at it than any maker does that I am acquainted with. He uses no label, but

has written across the back his autograph, name of town, and date. The following is a facsimile of the inscription :—

William Hamilton
Addington 31/12/00

HAMILTON, W. R. T., Edinburgh, contemporary.
 I know nothing of his work.

HANDLEY, HENRY, Worcester, contemporary. He was born in 1839. He began to make professionally in 1886, and up to the present he has made about eighty violins, violas, and violoncellos. He follows the model of a Guarnerius violin of the date of 1715, and the workmanship is good and careful all over. The wood is carefully selected, and the varnish is Whitelaw's "Amati" colour. The tone has none of the Joseph characteristics; it is moderately powerful and fairly clear and responsive. The plates are left thickly wooded, and the tone will probably be much better when age and use have done their work. Facsimile label :—

Henry Handley,
Fiddle Restorer and Maker,
Worcester.
1900 *N^o 56.*

HARBOUR, —, London: 1780–90. Inferior work. He lived at Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn, and later at Southampton Buildings, Holborn.

HARDIE, ALEXANDER, Maxwelltown: 1797–1855. He did not make very many violins, but the few that are left show that he was skilful, and that he could have excelled if he had devoted all his time to the art.



*Yours faithfully
Jas Hardie*

HARDIE, ALEXANDER, Galashiels : 1811-90. Many violins on his father's model—the Hardie previously mentioned—which is a sort of compromise between the models of Amati and Stainer. Both workmanship and tone are of mediocre quality.

HARDIE, JAMES, Edinburgh : 1800-56. This Hardie was not related to any of the other Hardies, or to the maker of that name now living. His models resemble those of Matt. Hardie, *i.e.* they are on the lines of N. Amati and Stradivari, but they can hardly be termed copies. The workmanship and tone are excellent. Label :—

JAMES HARDIE, FECIT,
EDINBURGH, 1841

HARDIE, JAMES (and Son), Edinburgh, contemporary. He was born at Aquhedley, in the Parish of Ellon, Aberdeenshire, on Jan. 1, 1836—not in 1837, as stated in some biographical dictionaries. He is the son of William and Mary Hardie, and is one of thirteen children—seven sons and six daughters. His mother's maiden name was Strachan, and she belonged to Drumnagarrow, Aberdeenshire. She is still alive, and considerably over ninety years of age. Hardie received his education at the Methlic Public School, and in the Normal College, Edinburgh.

He commenced his first instrument, a violoncello, when nine years old ; it was a copy of an instrument belonging to his father, and he made it throughout, except the pegs. This was an exceptionally early age at which to take up the gouge and calipers ; but the real period of work commenced when he was fifteen, at which age he began to work under his grandfather's instructions at Dunkeld.

On January 23, 1862, he was married to Miss Elsie Milne Davidson, at Methlic. From this union there has sprung a progeny of thirteen, named in order as follows :—Elsie, James, Elsie, William, Mary, Isabella, Mary, William, Alfred, Charles, Isabella, Evelyn, and Maud. Of these, six

died in infancy. This accounts for several of the names being the same.

The eldest son, James, who was an excellent violin player, and a leader in the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, died on April 6, 1898. From the age of fifteen down to the present, Hardie has been constantly at work. He is a prolific maker, and has, according to the strictest account, produced well over two thousand fiddles. He has made himself a goodly number of violoncellos and double-basses. All the work is personal. His sons assist him in minor matters, such as regulating, stringing up, &c., but not in actual making. Mr. William Hardie, however, has made one violin. Out of the two thousand and odd violins made by Hardie, a proportion of about twenty per cent., *i.e.* something like two hundred, are superior instruments, and reach a high standard of excellence. Many of these, it may be stated without exaggeration, are simply beautiful, and will certainly add lustre to the fame of Scotland's makers. The material used in them is of the finest quality—chosen more for its acoustic properties than for its artistic appearance. The varnish is very fine, having for its basis fossil amber. It varies in colour from rich golden yellow to red and ruby, but is more successful in the golden yellow than in the other tints.

He commenced to use amber oil varnish in 1869—just nine years after the first experiments of Dr. George Dickson, whatever may be the significance of the fact. I borrow the statement from Mr. W. C. Honeyman that Mr. Hardie is largely indebted to the Doctor for his initiation into the *μυστήρια* of the method of dissolving amber. Certain it is, however, that Hardie makes, and always has made, his own varnish.

Hardie follows the Stradivari, Guarneri, and Maggini models, but has a decided preference for the last named. His measurements are those of the great Brescian, but he varies in the thicknesses according to the density of his wood. All his instruments on the Maggini model are double purflled. This fact will help the average connoisseur to detect forgeries. It is curious that two series of forgeries of a diametrically opposite character have been perpetrated in connection with



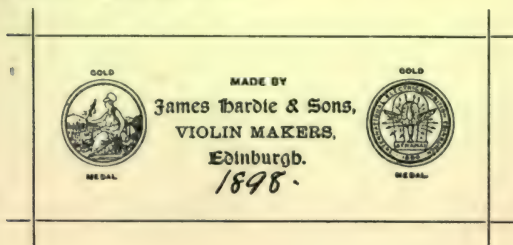
FRONT AND BACK OF MAGGINI COPY BY J. HARDIE

Hardie's name. One is recorded by Mr. Honeyman in his sketches in the *People's Friend*. It is this: several of Hardie's cheaper instruments—"pot-boilers" in fact—were purchased some years ago by a certain individual and labelled "Panormo" and "Fendt," and then sold in auction rooms.

The other is still more flattering to Hardie. A certain maker (personally known to the author), of mediocre attainments, possessed a fine Hardie fiddle (Maggini model) and made a number of copies of it. He varnished them with a poor oil varnish in glaring yellow, fitted them up, inserted a forged Hardie ticket, and got rid of them at the pawnbrokers. Some of these were sold afterwards for considerable sums. I know the *locale* of three of these counterfeit "Hardies" at the present moment. It has often amused me to watch their rôle in the little masquerade they carry on. One changed hands recently for £12. These "Hardie-Maggini" forgeries are, it should be noted, single purfed. *Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*.

Hardie's wood is excellent, and his tone is large, rich, and telling. He succeeds well in producing the Maggini tone, and, no doubt, when his violins have been well used, the tone will have the copious "tears" of the Brescian *maestro*. His prices range from £3 to £20.

He has exhibited on several occasions. At the Edinburgh International Exhibition in 1886 he gained a bronze medal; at the Glasgow Exhibition in 1886-87 an honourable mention; and at the International Exhibition, Edinburgh, in 1890, a gold medal. An Exhibition prize violin is shown in the illustration. Facsimile label:—



HARDIE, MATTHEW, Edinburgh: 1755-1826. He was born in Edinburgh in the year 1755, died in St. Cuthbert's Poorhouse, Aug. 30, 1826, and was buried in Greyfriars' Churchyard. His work is excellent, and deserves much more attention than has been given it by English connoisseurs and writers. All English writers on the violin assert that Hardie copied N. Amati, a fact which is denied by Mr. Honeyman, who says that he copied Stradivari. Dogma should be based on truth. There is such a thing as a logical principle of contradiction—a thing cannot both be and not be at the same time. The truth is, Matthew Hardie copied both Amati and Stradivari, and it is so self-evident that I am astounded that any one who undertakes to write on the subject should be ignorant of it. I have both seen and handled genuine examples of his art, some of which were on the Amati and some on the Stradivari model. So far as my experience goes, Hardie made about as many copies of the one as he did of the other. Except as regards varnish, his Amati copies will compare very favourably with the best work of Benjamin Banks. His tone is decidedly larger than that of Banks, but what it gains in quantity it often loses in quality. He was a prolific maker, and his fame must have spread far and near in his own day, since there were numerous instruments of his make to be found in the south of England, and some even in South Wales and the west of Ireland, so long ago as the early part of last century. One beautiful violin on the Amati model was for over fifty years in the possession of the Barham family, Trecwn, in far-away Pembrokeshire. The old squire of Trecwn bought it somewhere about 1830 of one of his tenants, a Mr. Campbell, who hailed from Scotland. In 1880 the last member of the Barham family died, and the beautiful old "Hardie" disappeared. I played on this fiddle more than once, and have a vivid recollection of its clear, responsive Maggini-like tone. The Hardies have a sort of traditional bias towards the Maggini tone. In my time, in the capacity of expert, I have examined about thirty of the violins of this maker, the majority of which, so far as my



FINE-TONED VIOLIN BY MATTHEW HARDIE

(Fecit 1803)

recollection goes, were on the grand Amati model. What particularly struck me was the indisputable evidence produced in each case as to the pedigree of the instrument, showing that the purchase was made by a deceased member of the family of the owner, either from the maker himself, or from some one else during the lifetime of the maker. It proved, as already stated, that Hardie's fame had reached to the far limits of the British Isles before he had laid down his tools. I doubt whether the fame of Banks, Forster, or Duke had spread so far in their own lifetime. It is not just, therefore, on the part of English authors to ignore this remarkable man's work. Hart, Haweis, and one or two more animadvert rather severely on the sins of omission of continental writers, forgetful of the fact that they themselves do scant justice to Scottish makers of renown. Scotland has produced quite an army of fiddle-makers, some of whom have left us examples of their art that will in many respects vie with our classical *chefs d'œuvre*. Had the early Hardies, M'George, Stirrat, &c., been more fortunate in the production of varnish, much of their work would be equal to the best work of English makers.

Matthew Hardie made no attempt at originality: he did his best to copy faithfully, but he was original in spite of himself. The principal measurements are generally in strict keeping with the original, but the stringency of figures does not imprison the personality of the man. When there is a strict watch set over self in the definition of the outline, individuality bursts the bonds in sunder and runs up the sides of the arch, only to sit down there and laugh at the man with the gouge. The sound-holes of the Amati copies are noteworthy. Here the truth of the foregoing remarks will become evident to any one who makes a close examination of the work. The sound-holes of N. Amati are artistic and quiet; they are always so cut and set in the table as not to call attention to themselves. Hardie's sound-holes are artistic enough, but they arrest one's attention, and speak to the eye with a sort of mute humour.

I had always imagined old Matt. Hardie to be a strange mixture of veneration and irony even before I had read a line

about him. His life is written in his work. Look at his Strad copies! The strong plates, the correct outline, and the graceful arching are evidence of a mind that was prostrate at the feet of the gods, but the saucy corners, and the up-tossed head betray something very akin to cynicism.

We have a parallel in the world of letters. Shelley, the poet, was an iconoclast in his calmer moments, but he prayed earnestly to the Deity in an Alpine thunderstorm. The only difference is that the proportion of veneration and cynicism is reversed. It is said that Hardie made many cheap instruments of poor wood, with imitation purfling, in his early days. It is quite possible, though I have never seen any poor instruments of his make. Most great makers have turned out indifferent work at one period or another of their life. Art is very much the creature of circumstances, and bears her dignity according as these smile or frown. There are artists living among us to-day who are capable of great things, but who are too poor to buy timber for the fashioning of their idols. They may see the god in the tree, as Michael Angelo saw his "David" in the rough slab of marble, but neither the right tree nor the right stone is always to be had for the asking. Hardie was evidently badly off for timber at more than one period of his life, if the story of the nail-marked wood be true. There is nothing very artistic about nail-holes, and little of value about weather-beaten, half-rotten paling slabs to make them desirable for fiddle-wood. Many, perhaps the majority, of Hardie's backs are very plain, but I have seen a few with exceedingly handsome and well-marked wood, cut so that the curl ran at a moderate inclination (*vide* illustration). The button is usually rather longer and more oval than the buttons of Amati or Stradivari. The sound-holes in the Stradivari copies are a trifle short; the exact length in a specimen recently examined by me being $2\frac{1}{8}$ in. The holes also did not recline so much, and the distance between them at the upper turns was about $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. His margins are moderately full, but the edges are not always so strong as they should be. The modern taste has improved upon the classical practice in respect to the edges. Nowadays, in high-class work, the

edges are left stronger and withal delicately rounded—a custom which is much to be commended from the point of view of utility, and not to be deprecated artistically. Hardie's varnish is a spirit one, thinly laid on; the colour is yellow—dark yellow to yellowish-brown. The basis is probably nothing more than gamboge, or gamboge and aloes, which in process of time is oxidised almost black, according to the nature of the menstrua and the method of application. Hardie's tone is good, even in his inferior instruments, and beautiful in his best. The inner strings are full and mellow, and the first string is sweet and silvery. The tone has a lingering echo which is pathetic and appealing.

Hardie was an enthusiast in his art, and his enthusiasm was of the contagious sort. Quite a coterie of cultured men gathered around him, who became infected with the fiddle-making fever. Among them were Peter Hardie, of Dunkeld, his cousin and a student at the Edinburgh University, David Stirrat, John Blair, George M'George, Alexander Yoole the solicitor, and others. Matthew Hardie was himself an educated man, and his society was sought by these men as much on account of his refined wit as on account of his fiddle lore. Many a congenial hour did these men of like passions pass together in the *atelier* in Low Calton. What a pity the sympathetic brush of Sir Joshua was not there to trace on canvas those faces radiant with the joy of the fiddle, or the faithful pen of a Boswell to give posterity word-pictures of those unique personalities! Labels:—

- (1) MADE BY
 MATT. HARDIE & SON, EDINBURGH,
 1797
- (2) MADE BY
 MATTHEW HARDIE, EDINBURGH,
 1810
- (3) MATTHEW HARDIE, EDINBURGH
 1809

The last two figures in the date are handwritten.

HARDIE, PETER, Dunkeld : 1775-1863. He was the son of Dr. Hardie, an army surgeon, and was born in 1775, probably abroad. He died in Nov. 1863, and was buried in Dowally churchyard, Perthshire. He is known as "Highland Hardie," and was a man of unique personality and great physique. His model is a compromise between that of Amati and Stainer. He sometimes followed the lines of his cousin, Matt. Hardie, but he generally exaggerated his arch. The tone is usually excellent. No label, but simply stamped under the button :—

P. HARDIE

HARDIE, THOMAS, Edinburgh : 1800-58. He was the son of the great Matt. Hardie, and possessed many of the fine qualities of his father. I have seen only three of his violins, in which the workmanship was beautiful, but the tone very inferior. There is not the slightest doubt that he artificially seasoned his wood, hence the immense disparity between the workmanship and the tone. His work has received high praise from no less an authority than the late Charles Reade, but I cannot endorse any of the sentiments of the great connoisseur as regards Thomas Hardie's tone. I have heard better in many a common factory fiddle. The workmanship may be faultless, but if the "vital spark"—the tone—be vile, the instrument deserves any name but that of "violin." Hardie had many rare gifts, but self-restraint does not appear amongst them. He met with his death through an accident, Jan. 19, 1858, whilst in a state of intoxication. Label :—

**THOMAS HARDIE,
FECIT, EDINBURGH, ANNO 1850**

HARE, JOHN, London : about 1700. Work resembles that of Urquhart. Label :—

**HARE & FREEMAN,
NEAR THE ROYAL EXCHANGE,
CORNHILL, LONDON**

HARE, JOSEPH, London : 1700-40. He made some



CHARLES HARRIS VIOLA

(In the Collection of Mr. C. Close, Dagmar Lodge)

splendid instruments on the lines of Stradivari, the varnish being of excellent quality. Label :—

JOSEPH HARE, AT Yⁿ VIOL AND FLUTE,
NEAR THE ROYAL EXCHANGE, IN CORNHILL,
LONDON, 1728

HARKHAM, —, London : 1765–85.

HARRIS, CHARLES, London and Adderbury : 1780–1800. He worked in Cannon Street Road, Ratcliffe Highway. I have seen one undoubtedly genuine Stradivari copy of his make, which had a golden-red varnish of excellent quality, and bore his label. The workmanship and tone were beautiful, justifying his being placed, in my estimation, very high in the foremost rank of British makers. He foolishly sold his birthright for a mess of meat, *i.e.* he sold his instruments unlabelled to the trade, and thus robbed himself of the credit which he ought to have got for excellent work. His violoncellos were highly prized and eagerly bought in his lifetime. The Stradivari copy which I saw was of full proportions, with a whole back, and the curl inclining to the right. The pine was as fine as any I have ever seen, with a “reed” of narrow and regular width. The scroll was carved with a masterly hand, and the sound-holes beautifully designed, but just a trifle wide, perhaps. The margin was full, and the edges strong and nicely rounded, with a moderately pronounced ridge midway between the purfling and the extreme edge. The tone was round and mellow. The magnificent viola illustrated here is the property of C. Close, Esq., Dagmar Lodge, Leeds, and shows work which is thoroughly Italian in feeling. The varnish on this instrument is of a dark amber colour, very fine in quality. Labels :—

(1)

CHARLES HARRIS,
FECIT, IN CANNON STREET,
LONDON, 1791

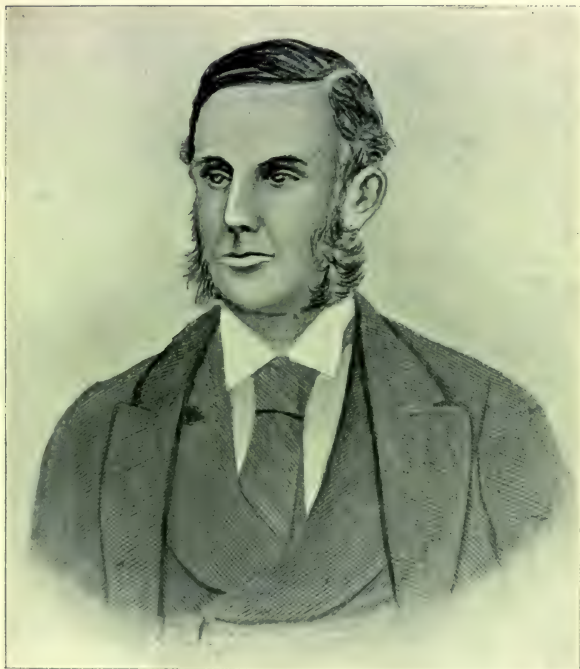
(2) MADE BY CHARLES HARRIS,
 ADDERBURY, OXON, 1826

HARRIS, CHARLES, London: 1795-1820. Son and apprentice of his father, Charles Harris, sen. He worked for John Hart for some time. Very good work, but it is not to be compared with that of his father.

HART, JOHN THOMAS, London: 1805-74. He was born on Dec. 17, 1805, and died Jan. 1, 1874. He became a pupil of Samuel Gilkes in 1820. He did not make many instruments, but attained great reputation as a repairer and connoisseur. He brought together many remarkable collections of Italian instruments, such as the Goding, the Plowden, and a large part of the Gillot, &c. I have never seen an instrument of his make, and cannot say whether he followed the lines of his master, or more closely those of Amati or Stradivari. Label:—

JOHN HART,
MAKER,
14 PRINCES STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE,
LONDON, 18—

HART, GEORGE & SON, London, contemporary. Mr. George Hart, of 28 Wardour Street, London, W., was born near Warwick on January 4, 1860. He is the son of the late Mr. George Hart, the expert of European reputation, and author of works on the violin, &c., and whose portrait we are able (through the courtesy of the subject of this sketch) to reproduce in the present work. Mr. Hart was educated at Grove House, Highgate, under the tutorship of the Rev. Mr. Tough. This same Mr. Tough was a pupil of the great Dr. Chalmers, of Disruption fame. Having gone the usual round at Highgate, young Hart was sent to Paris to finish his studies. Afterwards he entered the establishment at Wardour Street, where he has since remained worthily maintaining the supreme dignity of the house.



Your obedient
servant

On June 17, 1882, he was married, at Highgate, to Miss Katherine Jepson de Betham, daughter of John de Betham, by whom he has had two daughters, named Katharine and Irene, and one son named Frank. He employs a large number of experienced English and French workmen, and the firm turns out annually a considerable number of instruments. Some of the instruments, in point of tone, workmanship, and varnish, are *chefs d'œuvre*, and will worthily replace the old classical instruments when Cremona is no longer known save in the dusty pages of history.

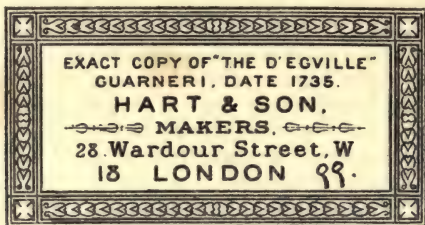
The personal supervision and genius of Mr. Hart is evident in every branch of the work. In nothing is this more evident than in the choice of wood.

The late Charles Reade, I think it was, who said that the giants of the forests whence the *maestros* had their wood are all gone. I doubt the truth of this very much. Some of the wood obtained to-day (and it is not all, or nearly all, obtained from the old Swiss chalets) is equal to that used two centuries ago. One need only examine and try some of Mr. Hart's finer fiddles to prove the accuracy of my contention.

In saying this I do not depreciate Hero Worship. What I would like to cry down is the narrow cult which would bind a Nessus robe around modern gods, and forbid freedom save to a handful of Cremonese deities. I know that I am talking heresy, and the school to which Mr. Hart belongs will be the first to give my effusions a cosy little corner in their *index expurgatorius*. Be it so! My *ἀπολογία* is the instruments to which I refer.

Mr. Hart makes a feature of facsimile reproductions of classical gems. I recently examined one of these, which was an exact copy of the famous Joseph Guarneri, known as "The D'Egville Joseph," owned by Mr. Hart. This copy is so close an imitation that it is almost impossible to distinguish it from the original. The imitation, it is pleasing to note, is not merely superficial, the tone also approximates to that of Guarneri in a degree that is bound

to astonish the most exacting ear. The label put into this instrument is as follows :—



This is a facsimile of Mr. Hart's ordinary label :—



The varnish is remarkably like that on the original, both in colour and in *pâte*. The author pointed this out to Mr. Hart, and endeavoured to probe his "inner consciousness" on the varnish question, but our subject could not be "drawn." He is remarkably reticent, as he is remarkably unostentatious. This is exemplified by the fact that he has never exhibited any of his instruments, and he has never permitted his portrait to be published, though he has been hard pressed to do so by keen admirers and hungry editors. It is beatific in this highly conventional age to come across a genuinely unostentatious person, for even genius has learnt latterly how to wed itself to cant.

The high-class instruments of Hart's own make ("Hart and Son's special make") are sold—violins at twenty-five guineas, violas at thirty guineas, and 'cellos at fifty guineas. These are of the finest material procurable. Others, which

are of a different class in material, but not in work, are sold at various prices (*vide* catalogue). "Tone determines the price" is Mr. Hart's rule.

Messrs. Hart have made a great feature of case work in recent years. Many of the cases they have made are of exceptional beauty, some of satin wood, inlaid and exquisitely painted with various designs; others are richly carved, with silver mountings. The makers themselves have spent as much as £70 and £80 on a single case. Case work has been elevated by Mr. Hart to a fine art. We heard an eminent connoisseur say the other day that it was about as wise to spend a lot of money on grand cases as it was to spend it on grand coffins. We think, however, that it is quite proper that the aristocracy in fiddle life should dwell in fitting mansions.

It is pretty generally known, I think, that the subject of our sketch is a fiddle expert of the highest prestige. His opportunities, though not quite of the Brobdingnagian proportions of those of Tarisio, have been immense. Nearly all the famous instruments of the world have passed through his hands—needless to mention, the "Dolphin," "Betts," "Emperor," "Paganini," Stradivaris, &c.; the "Leduc," "Vieuxtemps," Guarneris, &c., &c. Mr. Hart's present collection is a very large one, consisting of several fine specimens of all the chief makers. In addition to his vast knowledge gained from personal connoisseurship, he has reaped the benefit of superior wisdom at the start, when, for several years, he was closely associated with his father in every branch of the work.

Mr. Hart has in preparation a new, enlarged, and revised edition of his father's well-known work on the violin. He also contemplates issuing a work containing coloured plates of the most famous specimens of Stradivari and Guarneri in existence. He recently published a life of Count Cozio di Salabue by Federico Sacchi, edited by his great friend, A. Towry Piper. In this most interesting work, the editor and publisher have committed the fatal blunder of giving an untranslated appendix (which appendix, by the way, is considerably longer than the body of the work), and thus giving what is to all

intents and purposes a sealed book to English readers. For, although seventy or eighty per cent. of those interested in fiddle literature can probably read any work with tolerable ease in French or German, we doubt if ten per cent. can manage to wade through the Italian. We hope Mr. Hart will take the hint and give us another edition of Count Cozio.

HARVIE, ROBERT, contemporary.

HAWKES, —, Coventry : eighteenth century.

HAYNES & CO., London, contemporary. Chiefly dealers.

HAYNES, JACOB, London : c. 1750. He made fairly good copies of Stainer. Label :—

JACOB HAYNES,
IN SWALLOW STREET, ST. JAMES',
LONDON, FECIT —

HEAPS, ALFRED WALTER, Sydney, N.S.W. He is the son of the late John Knowles Heaps, of Leeds, and was born in January 1854. He commenced to study the violin at an early age, under Mr. Whittaker, of Leeds, and later he continued his studies under the late George Haddock. He made rapid progress and gave fair promise to become one of the leading English violinists, but the love of violin construction very early outgrew the love of violin music. He was apprenticed to Handel Pickard, Leeds, in 1869, with whom he remained until the end of 1874, after which time he was for over two years in his father's workshop. In 1875, he, along with his father, exhibited a quartette of instruments at the Leeds Exhibition, for which a prize medal and certificate were awarded. During the time he was with his father he made several instruments which were of excellent workmanship.

Shortly after this period Mr. Heaps accepted an appointment in Sydney as manager of the musical department of a wholesale



ALFRED WALTER HEAPS

house. After remaining with this firm for a time his business as a violin-maker and repairer increased to such an extent that he found it necessary to devote the whole of his time to the profession. During the latter part of his apprenticeship with Pickard, and previous to leaving Leeds to go to Sydney, he had many very valuable instruments entrusted to him for repairs, and his neat workmanship soon gained him a reputation in this particular branch of the profession. Since he went to Sydney his skill as a repairer has become favourably known throughout the whole of Australia and New Zealand, although he never advertises.

During the past fourteen or fifteen years he has made many violins, which have been sold for £20 to £25 each, violoncellos from £35 to £42. One of the latter was made to the order of the late Mr. Edgar Straus in 1891, and was used by him as his solo instrument during the whole of the time he was resident in Sydney. Mr. Heaps executed some important repairs for Ovid Musin when the latter was on an artistic tour in Sydney some few years ago.

In the manufacture of all his instruments he uses only the best material. He has in his possession a fine stock of sycamore, some of which has been preserved since about 1828. Of pine for bellies he also possesses a large stock, including a quantity which was exhibited as music wood at the great Exhibition in London, and purchased from Messrs. Beinhardt and Son, of Bohemia. (See Official Catalogue, Class x. No. 510.) He also keeps portions of all the material used by his father in the manufacture of instruments made during his life—which embraces various textures of wood—so that whatever instrument comes to him for renovation, he has no difficulty in matching the material. Mr. Heaps boasts of possessing a stock of wood large enough to suffice him for making violins as long as he lives, but he still continues to purchase as opportunity offers, to keep up his stock, so that at his demise he may be able to bequeath to his son (who is intended to follow the profession) whatever may be then unused.

He follows his father's model, reduced to 14 inches. He

keeps a record of the dimensions and thicknesses of all instruments made by his father or himself, and also of any valuable ones which pass through his hands for repairs, so that he is able to produce, when requested, new instruments after any model. His varnish is an oil one, of various colours. His instruments, both as regards tone and workmanship, rank in the first class.

Up to the time of writing, a copy of his label has not come to hand.

HEAPS, JOHN KNOWLES, Leeds: nineteenth century. Father of the above. He made excellent instruments, which will be more valued as time goes on.

HEATON, WILLIAM, Gomersal, contemporary. He was born October 6, 1827, at Hill Top, Gomersal. He is the son of James and Hannah Heaton, of Gomersal, and was brought up by his grandparents, Joseph and Sarah Lister, till he was about nine years of age, at a little out-wing of his native village called humorously the World's End, on account of its outlandishness. He received elementary education till he was about eleven, at which early age he commenced work with his father as a joiner and cabinet-maker. Both his father and grandfather were excellent workmen, and especially the latter, who was very deft at turning out small and curious articles of cabinet work. Joseph Lister also made one 'cello, of the Stainer model, and a very fair instrument it is. This instrument it was that first fired the imagination of young Heaton, and induced him to make his first instrument in his fifteenth year: it was a fiddle of no particular outline or model, but a pardonable effort. Shortly after he made a 'cello, which was a greater success. His next instrument was not made till he was forty-five years of age. This was a fiddle having its back, ribs, neck, and scroll carved out of a solid piece of sycamore. Since 1892 Heaton has been constantly at work as a regular maker. Up to the present he has made 156 violins, two violas, and eight 'cellos. He is a slow, patient worker, and turns out only about six instruments



WILLIAM HEATON

in the year. These—more especially those of his later period—are of the highest artistic merit, and for tonal qualities not easily surpassed.

He works on various lines, but chiefly on those of Strad. The work is not, however, a slavish imitation: it has unmistakable marks of originality about it. He has breathed Strad's breath of life into the copies, but the body is not exactly that of Antonio. The measurements of the violins of his best period are as follows:—

Length of body	$14\frac{1}{8}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	$6\frac{13}{16}$ "
" " middle bouts	$4\frac{7}{16}$ "
" " lower bouts	$8\frac{5}{16}$ "
Depth of ribs at bottom	$1\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " top	$1\frac{5}{8}$ "
Length of sound-holes	3 "
Distance between sound-holes at top	$1\frac{9}{16}$ "
Highest elevation above symmetrical plane—	
back	$\frac{17}{32}$ "
Highest elevation above symmetrical plane—	
belly	$\frac{15}{32}$ "

The outline is pure, bold, and of masculine rather than feminine qualities. It is grand and awe-inspiring rather than pretty and captivating. The arching is of extended equality, after the style of Maggini. The scroll is a fine piece of work, and is fairly large and well-proportioned. The distance between boss-edge and boss-edge is $1\frac{1}{8}$ in. The grooving at the last turn of the volute is more protracted and terminates nearer the centre of the axis than is usual in copies of Italian work. This is a very noticeable and picturesque feature of the side of many of Heaton's scrolls. The peg-box is wide and strong in wood—a very wise provision. The button is of full proportions, and could never be better made. The sound-holes are after Stradivari, except that the curve describing the upper and lower wings is not so pronounced as in those of Strad's golden period. The inlaying of the purfle is

perfection. The margin is of medium width, and the edges strong, rounded, and raised. In his early work Heaton raised the edges nearly an eighth, but in his best work there is no exaggeration. In a specimen now before me the edges are raised a sixteenth, nicely rounded, thawing with a smile into the gentle bed of the purfling.

The wood is of excellent quality. The pine of a specimen recently examined by me was equal to the best I have seen. The curl of the maple in all the Heaton fiddles which I have seen was of medium width and very regular. It would appear as though all these backs had been cut from the same piece of maple—some on the quarter, and some whole. The backs of the last six fiddles have been taken from a maple plank which was seasoned in the Gomersal Church Bell tower, and the instruments have been “christened” the “Tower” fiddles. Mr. Heaton has made one fiddle which he calls the “Gouge.” It derives its name from the fact that it has been finished entirely, both inside and outside, with the gouge; neither sand-paper nor the file having touched the wood. Another, on the Guarnerius model, is called the “Patchwork,” and is made of various kinds of violin wood. All the Heaton instruments are well stocked with wood. The last fiddle, made a short time since, turned the scales at eighteen ounces and a half in the “white.”

Mr. Heaton's violoncellos are spoken of very highly. No less an authority than Mr. Arthur Broadley considers them to be among the very best work of modern times. A violoncello made to his order, and named the “Chats” in compliment to the popular work on 'cello playing, is said to possess a remarkable tone. The following rather lengthy quotation is from a letter of Mr. Broadley's to me anent this instrument.

“The instrument is of original model, and although one looks to the great Italian masters for perfection of outline and model, yet the 'cello under notice does not suffer through comparison with classical instruments.

“Perhaps the maker more than any which the model suggests is Banks, the great English maker, and I think I am

right in asserting that the earlier 'cello of Mr. Heaton's make were copies of this maker, but the 'Chats' 'cello is no copy of any instrument or any maker, but the child of Mr. Heaton's own fancy. The outline is bold yet artistic, and the model is what one would describe as compact; there does not seem to be any waste places—everything has been nicely calculated and the whole effect is very fine. The purfling, which is placed rather further away from the edge than usual, assists in giving a boldness to the outline which is very satisfying; but if one must look for originality, pray look at the curves of the inner bouts, the relative width of the waist, and the cut and placing of the *f* holes. Of the latter, the straight-cut, broad wings are a feature—Guarnerius magnified. So beautifully balanced are the *f*'s that this extreme width of the wings is not at the first glance observable, but one looks and wonders how an old man long past the prime of life has had the skill to cut such clearly defined lines. *Purpose*—that should have been the name of the 'cello, not 'Chats.'

"The whole design of the instrument is characteristic of a man who has lived his life among the breezy freshness of the Yorkshire hills.

"The wood is very fine, well chosen, old, and well-seasoned. The belly is made of rather open-grained pine, of fine tone-producing qualities; the back and ribs are of extremely beautifully-figured sycamore. The back is in the whole piece and is made from wood cut on the slab. In this case the effect is very beautiful. The figure is best described as being like *moiré* silk. The grain, which is very peculiar, shows up like the 'water-marks' in the said material, and the flames seem to 'shimmer' from every part of the surface.

"The tone of the instrument is exceedingly fine, very brilliant and plentiful. One great feature of the instrument is the fine quality of the A string, which to a soloist is of the utmost importance, and the higher up the string one plays, the more brilliant does the tone become. This is so different from the usual run of modern 'cellos, which are generally thin in the higher positions of the A string. The tone of the

instrument at every part of its register is very even, and it is the opinion of several professional friends who have seen and heard the 'Chats' 'cello, that a finer instrument could not be produced. It is varnished a brilliant orange brown."

The value of the 'cello as it stands is placed by Mr. Broadley at £50, although Mr. Heaton generally charges from £20 to £30 for 'cellos.

The 'cello, besides bearing the maker's label, has the following inscription :—

—❧— " CHATS. " —❧—

Built to the order of

MR. ARTHUR BROADLEY

PROFESSOR of the VIOLONCELLO,
etc., etc.

by Wm. HEATON, Gomersal 1900.

The dimensions are as follows :—

Width across top	13 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches.
" " middle	9 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
" " bottom	17 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Width of ribs, top	4 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
" " bottom	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (good)
Length of <i>f</i> 's	5 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
Width between <i>f</i> 's at top	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Length of body	29 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
" " vibrating string	26 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

A front view of this fine 'cello is shown in the illustration. The following is a facsimile of the label usually used :—

WILLIAM HEATON,
MAKER,
HILL TOP, GOMERSAL.
Nr. Leeds.



THE "CHATS" 'CELLO BY HEATON

(Fecit 1900)





HEESOM, EDWARD, London, contemporary: 1745-55.
Stainer model; indifferent work. Label:—

EDWARD HEESOM,
LONDINI, FECIT 1745

HENDERSON, DAVID, Aberdeen: nineteenth century.
Very poor work and tone.

HESKETH, THOMAS EARLE, Manchester, contemporary. He is the son of William and Amelia Hastings Hesketh, and was born in Manchester on August 14, 1866. His workshop is at 23 Lower Mosley Street. His mother's maiden name was Hilton, and both his parents were descendants of old Lancashire families. He was educated in the Board and Higher Grade Schools of his native city. He was apprenticed to Mr. G. A. Chanot, and the indentures were drawn up on April 6, 1885. He remained as apprentice for five years and as journeyman for one year. In 1891 he commenced business on his own account, and he has remained since at the above address. He was married on Nov. 2, 1889, at St. James' Church, Moss Side, to Miss Sarah Grace Yates. The offspring of their union are: Ross Grace, Tom, Florence Gertrude, Lillian Jane, and Dorothy Yates.

He works on each of the following models: Strad, Joseph, Amati, Ruggeri, Stainer, and Maggini, but copies the two first principally. He at one time worked also on two original models, which he has now discarded, as they were on the small side. A third original model of his, of fuller proportions, is successful and gives splendid results. Its dimensions are:—

Length of body	14 inches.
Width across upper bouts	$6\frac{1}{2}$ "
" " middle bouts	$4\frac{9}{16}$ "
" " lower bouts	$8\frac{7}{8}$ "
Length of inner bouts from corner to corner	$5\frac{5}{8}$ "
Length of sound-holes	$3\frac{3}{8}$ "
Distance between sound-holes at upper turns	$1\frac{5}{8}$ "
Height of ribs $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches, diminishing to .	$1\frac{7}{8}$ "

Two noticeable features of this model are the *ff*-holes and the button. The former are a slight modification of the Brescian type, and the latter is not of the usual form, but four-sided.

Mr. Hesketh has made several magnificent copies of an A. and H. Amati viola. One of these which I examined recently was made to the order of Mr. Rawdon Briggs, of Hallé's, the Brodsky, and other quartettes. It is of large size, and considered by its owner a superb instrument. Its dimensions are :—

Length	16 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches.
Width, top	7 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
„ centre	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
„ bottom	9 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
{ Depth of bottom ribs	1 $\frac{9}{16}$ "
{ Diminished by $\frac{1}{8}$ inch at top.	

Besides the violas on the A. and H. Amati model, he has made one on the Strad model, 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ in., one Ruggeri, 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ in., and one Maggini, 15 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. He has made only two 'cellos, Strad model. The total number of instruments made up to date is fifty-five, exclusive of a number of three-quarter size fiddles, made to order.

Mr. Hesketh's wood is of excellent quality. He possesses a considerable quantity which was formerly the property of Craske. This latter maker is said to have bought his wood at Forster's sale. The maple of two fiddles examined by me was somewhat plain in figure, but magnificent for its tonal properties. In one viola the curl was of medium width and of mathematical regularity. In another fiddle the wood had a broad "flame" of unsurpassable beauty. The pine is of straight grain, moderately narrow in "reed," and acoustically perfect. The backs in the Amati copies are usually cut on the slab, and those in the Strad and Joseph copies are, as a rule, either whole or joined.

The workmanship, varnish, and tone of Hesketh combine to give his instruments a place among the *élite* of modern pro-

ductions, and a high seat even amongst the mighty. A brief description of a typical example of his work will suffice. This is a Vuillaume-Strad copy. The outline is very pure, and the modelling beautiful. The lines of the back are gracefulness itself. The gentle slope of the arching, as it melts into the margins, is like the swell of the well-chiselled breast of a goddess. The margins are moderately wide, and the edges full and rounded. The corners are full and piquant. The scroll and sound-holes both show the master mind and the cunning hand. The former is in the true Stradivarian spirit, although, perhaps, to be severely correct, the slope of the volute in its departure from the boss is not of the same angle, and the boss itself is in greater relief. The purfling is laid in without the suspicion of a tremor. The varnish is a rich, soft, dark, golden amber. It lights up the "flame" of the wood, which appears like watered silk seen through a film of stained glass. The tone is large, rich, and responsive. Hesketh uses both oil and spirit varnishes, of his own composition, and in all the usual colours.

The work is nearly all personal. One journeyman, named Robert Elliot Keen, is employed. Keen has been with Hesketh six years (five years as apprentice), and is an excellent and steady workman. He hails from Brompton, the birthplace of the Forsters. Another workman, named Georges Boulangeot, of Mirecourt, was employed for about two years, but he left in 1898. Mr. Hesketh repairs very extensively. So many old instruments come to him for repair that he is prevented from producing many new ones.


His prices are :—

Violins	£12, 12s. and £15, 15s.
Violas	£15, 15s.
'Cellos	25 guineas.

Mr. Hesketh plays well on both the violin and viola. He has recently organised a series of quartette concerts, at which the Rawdon Briggs and other quartettes are the executants. These quartettes are supplied with instruments made by him,

and one of the objects of the concerts is to test and to demonstrate the worth of instruments of the modern British school.

Facsimile label :—

Thomas Earle Hesketh
Manchester Fecit 1900 

HIGSON, DANIEL, Ashton-on-Ribble, contemporary. He was born at Droylsden, near Manchester, August 13, 1849. He is the eldest son of John and Elizabeth Caroline Higson. His father was an antiquarian of considerable repute, and stained glass windows are erected to his memory at St. Mary's Church, Droylsden, and at St. Thomas's Church, Leesfield. Higson has made several instruments on an original model. The workmanship is rather rough, but it is not without character, and the tone of one violin which I tried was very fair. Higson has travelled a great deal, and he is a well-read man. He is an ardent sportsman, and an authority on wild fowl. He has published a book entitled "Sea-fowl Shooting Sketches," which is of high merit and exceedingly interesting. He builds his own canoes, makes gun-stocks, &c. In short, he is so many-sided that he can never hope to excel in the exacting art of violin-making. Facsimile label :—

*No longa Vita brevis.
Made by Daniel Higson
Ashton-on-Ribble
1st March 1900. N^o 17.*

HILL, HENRY LOCKEY, London : 1774-1835. He was the son of Lockey Hill, the grandson of Joseph Hill, and the father of the world-renowned William Ebsworth Hill. He was a pupil of his father, and he worked for some time with John Betts. Later he became partner with his brothers in his father's firm, and contributed largely by his excellent

work to make the name of "Hill" one of the greatest fiddle names in all Britain. The workmanship and tone are magnificent—sufficiently so to furnish the forger with an excuse to extract the label (if there were one) and inserting another bearing a more favoured name. I have seen more than one Lockey Hill violoncello in this country carrying an Italian "passport." A renowned 'cello player uses at the present moment a Henry Lockey Hill instrument with a Stradivari label. It is of the same measurements as the Strad 'cello sent by Friedrich Wilhelm III. of Prussia to John Betts in 1810, to be sold in this country. In all respects it is a perfect copy, except as regards the varnish and the purfling. The varnish, although of excellent quality, and a close imitation, is not to be compared with that of Stradivari. The purfling is carefully inlaid, but not in the manner of the original. Any one examining the mitring at the corners will perceive the difference. Careful analysis and comparison of this specimen with other Henry Lockey Hill violoncellos reveal the identity of style. Some years ago I saw a violin by this maker, made on the Amati model, with a slab back of beautiful figure, which had a dulcet tone. The colour of the varnish resembled the brownish-purple tint of the bark of the birch tree in autumn. Hill frequently used a light-coloured varnish, which is perfectly transparent and very elastic. I have seen only one of his violas, which was on a modified Amati model, with a widened waist, and not over-pronounced arching. The tone was large and deep on the lower strings, and clear and incisive on the upper ones. The scroll was in the Italian style, free and easy, and the sound-holes "clean" and graceful. The varnish on this instrument was of a pinkish tint, laid on thinly and nicely polished. Altogether the work of Hill is exceedingly fine, and it is a great pity there is not more of it.

HILL, JOSEPH, London: 1715-84. He worked at "Ye Harp and Hautboy," in Piccadilly, London, under Peter Wamsley, where he was a fellow-apprentice with Benjamin Banks. He worked also in various other places,

and was assisted by his sons, William, Joseph, Lockey, and Benjamin. I have not seen any of his instruments, but his violoncellos and double-basses are highly praised. Mr. Arthur Broadley uses a small-sized Joseph Hill violoncello in his solo playing at present.

HILL, WILLIAM, London : 1740-80. I have not, to my knowledge, seen any of his work.

HILL, WILLIAM EBSWORTH, London : 1817-95. One of the greatest names in fiddle lore. Full justice has been done to his life and work in the very able sketch by the late Rev. H. R. Haweis, in "Old Violins," to which the reader is referred.

HILL & SONS, London, contemporary. The present members of the firm are the four sons of the great William Ebsworth, viz. : William Henry, born June 3, 1857; Arthur Frederick, born Jan. 25, 1860; Alfred Ebsworth, born Feb. 1862; and Walter Edgar, born Nov. 4, 1871. The reputation of the firm is world-wide, and the several works published by the Messrs. Hill, including their life of Stradivari, are too well-known to call for any comment here.

HIRCUT, —, London : 1600.

HOLLOWAY, JOHN, London : 1775-95. He worked at 31 Gerard Street, Soho. Indifferent work.

HOPKINS, —, Worcester : nineteenth century. A fair workman, but he artificially seasoned his wood, and thus robbed himself of all future credit.

HOSBORN, THOMAS ALFRED, London : 1630. A maker of lutes and viols.

HUDSON, GEORGE, Skegness, contemporary. He is the son of Richard Hudson, better known in Lancashire as "Dick o' New-laith," a famous fiddler, and was born at

Goodshawfold, Rossendale Valley, on Feb. 27, 1859. He has received a good elementary education, and has taken up chemistry latterly as a hobby. He has made up to date about one hundred violins, and a few violoncellos and double-basses. He follows various models, and the workmanship is good and careful.

HUME, CHARLES DAVID, Hawthorn, Melbourne, contemporary. He is a native of Liverpool, and emigrated to Australia about ten years ago, where he follows the musical profession, and makes violins as a hobby. He obtained a Diploma of Merit for a case of violins at the Bendigo Exhibition held last year. I have not seen any of his work, and therefore cannot give further particulars.

HUME, RICHARD, Edinburgh : c. 1530-35. A famous viol and lute maker.

I

IRESON, FRANK HERBERT, Bishop Auckland, contemporary. He was born at Croydon, on Oct. 26, 1868. He is a pianoforte-tuner and repairer by trade, and makes violins during spare moments. He follows the model and dimensions of Walter H. Mayson, and turns out a nice instrument. The tone is of a bright, pleasing quality.

J

JAMIESON, THOMAS, Aberdeen : 1830-45. Good work and tone.

JANSON, EDWARD POPPLEWELL, Manchester : 1840-60. Pupil of William Booth, jun. Average work and tone.

JAY, HENRY, London : c. 1615-67. A maker of viols. His work is considered excellent, but I am not acquainted with it and cannot therefore offer any remarks.

JAY, HENRY, London : 1746-68. A maker of "Kits" chiefly. The workmanship is very neat, and the varnish of good quality. The tone of one of these "Kits" which I saw a few years since was clear and sweet. Jay is said to have received £5 for each "Kit" that he sold—a sum which is equivalent to nearly £10 to-day. This is hardly credible, seeing that Banks and Duke got only £6 for their best violins.

Jay made many violoncellos for Longman and Broderip. The label in the "Kit" which I saw and tried read :—

MADE BY HENRY JAY,
INSTRUMENT MAKER,
IN LONG ACRE, LONDON, 1750

JAY, THOMAS, London : c. 1690. Made a few excellent violins.

JOHNSON, JOHN, London : 1750-60. Average work, on the Stainer model. The tone, although not large, is clear and penetrating. A very high-arched violin, with thin, dry, yellow varnish bore the following label :—

MADE BY JOHN JOHNSON,
CHEAPSIDE,
17 LONDON 55

JONES, —, Barnstaple, contemporary. I have not seen any of his work.

JONES, JOHN, Port Dinorwic, contemporary. He was born in Carnarvon, on Feb. 17, 1833. He is a plasterer by trade, and makes fiddles *en amateur*. The workmanship is very fair, considering that he only took up the gouge very late in life. The wood is plain, but the tone is of a good quality. Jones is a "Cymro" of the old stamp, and a very genuine "character." He has played the violoncello for many years in the Parish Church, Llanfairisgaer, and the author hopes to

give a fuller sketch of his life as a "famous fiddler" in another volume.

K

KELMAN, JAMES, Aberchirder : nineteenth century.
Commonplace work and tone.

KENDAL, GEORGE, —, contemporary.

KENNEDY, ALEXANDER, London : 1695-1785.
Very fair work on the Stainer model. Label :—

ALEXANDER KENNEDY,
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MAKER, LIVING IN MARKET STREET,
IN OXFORD ROAD, LONDON, 1740

KENNEDY, JOHN, London : 1730-1816. A nephew
of Alexander Kennedy. Indifferent work.

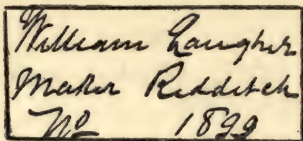
KENNEDY, THOMAS, London : 1784-1870. He
was a prolific maker, and turned out at least two thousand
instruments of all sizes. The workmanship is good all over,
but the tone is not of equal merit, being often harsh and
metallic. A violin with a birch back and yellow varnish had
the following label :—

THOS. KENNEDY,
LONDINI, 1860

L

LAUGHER, WILLIAM, Redditch, contemporary.
He was born at Studley, in Warwickshire, in the year 1830.
He is a manufacturer of steel and plated pins by trade, and
makes violins as a hobby. His work is neat and well-finished,
and the tone, although not large, is of a good quality. He
follows various models, and uses oil varnish of different colours.
He has made about fifty violins and a few violas. The wood

is carefully selected for its acoustic properties. Facsimile label :—



LEWIS, EDWARD, London : 1695-1730. A magnificent maker, whose work is very rare. In the course of twenty-five years' connoisseurship I have seen only one of his violins, which was on a model approximating to that of Maggini. In this instrument, wood, workmanship, and tone combined to give the maker a high position in the front rank of our early makers. The varnish was an oil one, of a rich golden-red colour, perfectly transparent, and soft as velvet to the touch. The tone on the higher strings was beautifully clear and brilliant. I have never heard of a violin of his on the Stainer model, and I do not think he copied that maker at all. Judging from the single instance referred to, I do not think his taste would allow him to imitate the German high arch.

No label of his is known.

LIGHT, EDWARD, London : 1780-1805. A lute and harp maker. He made a few violins also. One of these, indifferently made, had the following label :—

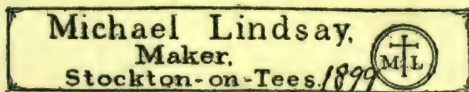
EDWARD LIGHT,
MAKER,
LONDON, 1797

LINDSAY, —, Newcastle-on-Tyne, contemporary. I know nothing of him.

LINDSAY, DAVID, Brechin, contemporary. He is reported to be a good maker, but I have not seen any of his work. He follows the Maggini model.

LINDSAY, MICHAEL H., Stockton-on-Tees, contemporary. He was born in Ireland on April 12, 1837. He has been a professional violin-maker for nearly forty years. He follows the Stradivarius model, using handsome wood and a fine varnish. I have seen only one of his instruments, which was well made and had a rather small but very sweet tone. M. Polonaski has tried some of this maker's violins, and reports very favourably on their tonal qualities. The Messrs. Balfour, the violin experts, say with regard to his varnish that it "should rank among the highest of the varnishes now in use, being Cremona-like in style." Whilst unable to endorse all that these experts say in this matter, I unhesitatingly add that the varnish is of an excellent quality. But it is impossible to form just conclusions either as to workmanship or tone from the examination of a single specimen. Mr. Lindsay had a paralytic seizure some two years ago, and he is unable now to make new instruments, but has to confine himself to repairs. He won a medal for an exhibit of violins at the Liverpool Exhibition. He has made a large number of violins, violas, violoncellos, and double-basses.

Facsimile label :—



LISTER, JOHN, Leeds: 1720-30. Very ordinary Stainer copies.

LOGAN, JOHN, Biggar, N.B., contemporary. He is an excellent amateur maker who has made and restored a large number of instruments. He follows the Joseph, Strad, and Maggini models. One violin which I examined was made on the Strad model with plates graduated after a Maggini instrument. The tone was large, rich, and free.

He uses the Rev. Gordon Palmer's varnish, which he believes to be the best in the market. Label :—

MADE BY
JOHN LOGAN,
ABINGTON, N.B., 1895

LOMAX, JACOB, Bolton, contemporary. He was born in Bolton in 1850, and he makes and sells violins professionally at 11 Durham Street, in conjunction with his other and chief business, pawnbroking. He uses his own varnish, and turns out work which, in point of workmanship and tone, is of average merit. Facsimile label :—

Jacob Lomax.
Bolton 1850
No 31.

LONGMAN & BRODERIP, London : 1750-73. They were instrument sellers, and not actually makers. Some of our chief classical makers disposed of their second-rate instruments to them, into which were inserted the firm's trade label.

M

M'GEORGE, GEORGE, Edinburgh : 1796-1820. A pupil and follower of Matthew Hardie, who turned out excellent work. He followed the model of Stradivari chiefly, but Amati copies have been met with. He used a spirit varnish, which is of a slightly better quality than that of his master. The only undoubtedly genuine example of his work that I have seen bore no label.

MAGHIE, JOHN FISHER, Dalston, contemporary. He was born on Nov. 1855, at Dalston. He received a good elementary education at the grammar school in his native

place. He works on various models, and uses varnish of a red or brownish yellow colour. Facsimile label :—

John Fisher Maghie,

AT

DALSTON.

IN

CUMBERLAND

M'GILL, JAMES CAMPBELL, Arran, contemporary. He was born in Loudoun, Ayrshire, in 1836. His instruments are well made, and possess a good round tone. Label :—

J. G. M'GILL,

MAKER,

ARRAN, 1896

M'INTOSH, JAMES, Blairgowrie : 1801-73. It appears that he made good instruments, but I have not seen any of them and cannot say anything about his work.

MACINTOSH, JOHN, Galston, N.B., contemporary. He was born where he now lives, at Strath Cottage, midway between Galston and Newmilnes—places now become famous as the centres of the lace curtain industry of Scotland—in the year 1853. With an inborn predilection for the fine arts in general, and for music in particular, his attention became at a very early age centred on the violin, and he learned first to love its rich and melodious tones by hearing it performed upon by a relative, who was a good player of Scottish reels and strathspeys. Mr. Macintosh is a gentleman amateur, and makes only from love of the instrument. He has made several violins of the orthodox type, but he also has experimented largely with the view of discovering the relation between form and sound. Some of his violins are decorated on the back with portraits of celebrities and landscape sceneries in oil colours. One of these is made throughout of oak which was taken from the roof of the old castle at Mauchline, said

to be the house wherein Robert Burns was married to his "Bonnie Jean." When the Burns Memorial Museum at Mauchline was opened, the violin was presented to the promoters and gladly accepted by them as a relic worthy of a place in an institution founded in honour of the immortal poet. Another bears the portrait of Sir Walter Scott, and has the following ditty inscribed on the back inside :—

"Hey diddle, diddle,
Who made this fiddle?
I know, I know,
Hey diddle, diddle, here is the riddle—
Where did the wood of this fiddle grow?"

"Sir Lewis Morris," a decorated violin, made on original lines, has a large, round, and fluid tone. He uses Whitelaw's varnish, mostly in dark amber colour. In addition to violin-making, Mr. Macintosh writes much on antiquity and kindred subjects, and he has published one or two volumes of poetry.

M'INTOSH, WILLIAM, Dundee, contemporary. He was born at Abernethy, in 1852. He follows the Stradivari model almost exclusively, and turns out excellent work both as regards tone and workmanship. The plates are left thick in wood, and the arching and edges are gracefully finished. Facsimile label :—



M'KENZIE, MALCOLM, Dumbarton, N.B., contemporary. He was born at Burntisland, Fife, on Feb. 22, 1828. He made his first violin at the age of sixteen, since which time he has made continuously, and has turned out many

violins and one violoncello. The workmanship and tone are of good average merit. Facsimile label :—

MALCOLM M'KENZIE
DUMBARTON.

M'LAY, WILLIAM, Kincardine-on-Forth : 1815- —. Work and tone very indifferent.

M'NEILL, JOHN, Edinburgh, contemporary. He is reported to have made several beautiful instruments, but I have not seen any of his work.

M'NEILL, WILLIAM, Edinburgh, contemporary. Average work and tone.

M'NICOLL, ALEXANDER, Padanaram : nineteenth century. Indifferent.

McSWAN, JOHN, Partick, contemporary. An amateur who has made about twenty violins of about average merit.

MALLAS, ALEXANDER, Leith : 1826-91. He was a native of Aberdeenshire, and a trained millwright by trade. His instruments are well-finished, and possess a firm and ringing tone.

MANN, JOHN ALEXANDER, Glasgow : 1810-89. He was born at Forfar, May 13, 1810, and died at Glasgow, April 30, 1889. Mann was a remarkable person in many respects, and in some unique. He was never more at home than when amongst curious machines, nor more at ease than when evolving mechanical intricacies. He was for many years the right-hand man of the conjurer, J. H. Anderson—"The Wizard of the North." His mystical proclivities and love of the occult followed him to the *atelier*, if we are to believe the apocryphal revelations of a well-known author. I regret that careful investigation has led me to doubt the correctness of many of the tales anent the intercourse between

him and Vuillaume, and I prefer to leave these, however idyllic their character, severely alone.

The few instruments attributed to Mann which I have had the fortune to see were not calculated to rouse the connoisseur into ecstatic utterance. They were beautifully made, but timid and tame. They reminded one of Sir Joshua Reynolds' criticism of a picture. The great painter was standing before a painting by another celebrated artist one day, and on being asked his opinion of the work, replied : "It wants—it wants—d——n me ! it wants that." Nothing aggravates the connoisseur like frigid monotony. No genius in the poetical world ever reached the summit of Parnassus by a path previously made, and no two great violin-makers ever walk exactly the same road.

MARNIE, JOHN, Padanaram : nineteenth century.
Indifferent.

MARSHALL, JOHN, Aberdeen, contemporary. An excellent workman, who is famous throughout Scotland as a neat repairer. He has made a large number of instruments, mostly on the Stradivari model. Label :—

JOHN MARSHALL,
VIOLIN-MAKER,
ABERDEEN, 1887,
J. M.

MARSHALL, JOHN, London : 1750–60. Fairly good work on the Stainer model, with sometimes exaggerated archings. He varied his labels.

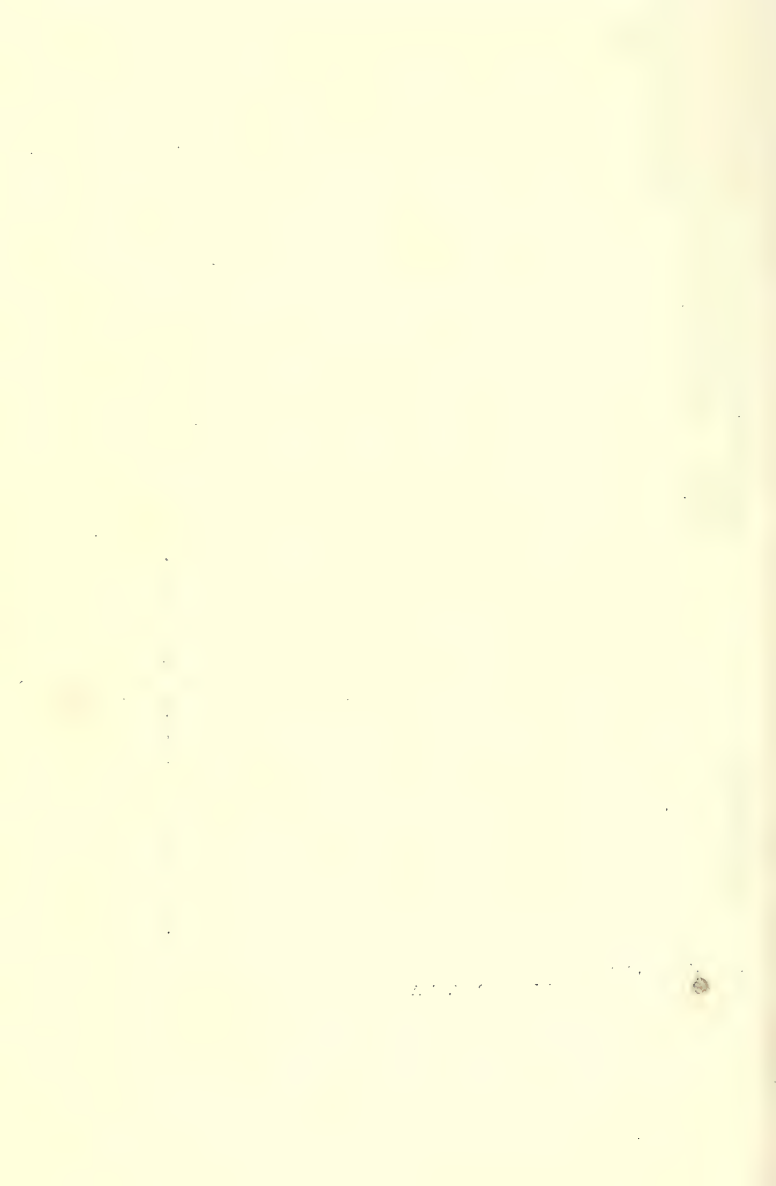
MARTIN, —, London. Little or nothing is known of him.

MAYSON, WALTER H., Manchester, contemporary. He was born at Cheetwood, Manchester, on Nov. 8, 1835. He is a son of Mark Mayson, who was born at Keswick, and of Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the celebrated William Green,



Photo. A Reston, Stratsford

WALTER H. MAYSON



painter in oils and water-colours. His father was a landed proprietor in Keswick, and a descendant of an ancient Cumberland family. Green, the maker's grandfather on his mother's side, was contemporary and intimate with Coleridge, father and son; Professor Wilson, who wrote a memoir of him in *Blackwood's Magazine* at his death, and the poet Wordsworth, who composed the epitaph now over his grave, in Grasmere Churchyard, close to where the said Wordsworth lies. He was educated by Thomas Walley, at Cheetham Hill, Manchester. He was married when twenty-eight years of age, at Eccles old Church, to Catherine Mary, eldest daughter of John Ellwood, bandmaster, whom he lost in five months in premature childbirth. Later he married the widow of Frank King, of Manchester, by whom he has five children living, viz.: Sarah Elizabeth; Walter Henry, professor of the violin and composer; Stansfield, ditto; Florence Gertrude; and Leonora Beatrice. His second wife's maiden name was Hutchinson, and her native place Leicester.

During his childhood Mayson manifested a strong natural bent for the use of fine edge tools. He made at an early period several articles of cabinet work, and also a number of Æolian harps. He invented an ingenious contrivance for this primitive instrument whereby the usual volume of sound was more than quadrupled. He showed an early leaning also towards literature. He had scarcely attained his majority when he published a volume of dramatic poetry, which evinced a considerable wealth of thought and mastery of verse.

He received no training whatever in the art of violin-making; he is absolutely self-taught. His first fiddle was made at "The Polygon," Lower Broughton, and begun on Oct. 16, 1873. A few more violins were made at the same house. He then removed to a workshop in Burton Arcade, Deansgate, Manchester, where he remained for some time and made many instruments.

At this period Mayson suffered a great deal of persecution from his brother artists (if any one can be called an artist whose soul is stained with prejudice). Certain of the fraternity

sought to put his light under a bushel by dubbing his work as "amateurish," "unclassical," &c. The inanity of these epithets soon became apparent when men of note began to recognise in Mayson a genius of the highest order.

He next removed to Croft House, Newby Bridge, at the foot of Windermere, where he remained for six years, and made many fine instruments. From there he went back to Manchester to open a shop at 62 Oxford Street, where he has carried on business for several years. In September 1899, he opened a workshop at 256 High Holborn, London, which he had to close shortly after through lack of patronage. It has ever been the fate of genius to be recognised by only the few during its life day. The blinding light of the sun forbids us to look at the source of day straight in the face.

Mr. Mayson has made up to the present 733 instruments, including violins, violas, and violoncellos. He makes on the classical lines, and also on an original model, but he is no copyist of any one. His wood is of the choicest maple and pine. In both the back and front tables of his high-class instruments it is not a whit inferior to that used by Stradivari in his finest examples. One specimen may be mentioned, viz., "Cordelia," in which the wood of the back is artistically finer than anything I have ever seen, classical or post-classical. His varnish is his own composition, of various colours, and of a very elastic oil, perfectly transparent and free from any thought of cracking. In the softer shades it is surpassingly beautiful, defying the power of description as it defies the possibility of imitation.

His original model is shown in the annexed plate. As to its merit there can be but one opinion: it is the conception of a lofty mind—the creation of genius. The sound-holes are the classical conception idealised, and the scroll the quintessence of gracefulness and strength. The entire work is the product of a master mind. Such specimens as "Cordelia," "Eudocia," "Hallé-Mayson," "In Memoriam," "Isidor," "Bianca d'Opia," &c., are poems—poems that sing their own poetry in streams of velvet sounds.



"MEREDITH MORRIS" VIOLIN BY MAYSON

(Fecit 1903)



THE "CORONATION EDWARD VII." BY MAYSON

(Fecit 1902)

The dimensions of his original model are :—

Length of body	$14\frac{5}{8}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	$6\frac{7}{8}$ "
" " middle bouts	$4\frac{1}{2}$ "
" " lower bouts	$8\frac{1}{2}$ "
Depth of rib at lower bouts	$1\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " upper bouts	$1\frac{1}{8}$ "
Length of sound-holes	3 "
Distance between sound-holes at upper turn	$1\frac{5}{8}$ "

The arching is moderately pronounced—a trifle more than that of the flat Strads.

Mr. Mayson is now mostly engaged in carved-back instruments, choosing rocky landscapes, chiefly from the Lake district, flowers, &c., which are carved most beautifully in low relief.

The illustration facing this page will give some idea of this beautiful work. The relief is only one-fortieth of an inch, and the effect is marvellous in so slight a cutting. The following is a list of Mayson's carved-back fiddles down to date :—"Rosa Bonheur," "Moliere," both in scroll work ; "Anemone," carved in this flower with a girl dancing over a shell in the centre ; "Portinscale," a group of youths at the top engaged in plucking and eating grapes, and another group at the lower part holding a carouse on the fermented liquor of the same fruit ; "I will arise," Christ ascending among clouds ; "Lord Cavendish" and "Thomas Haviland Burke," both in scroll work ; "Anemone" (No. 2), same as before ; "Old Windsor," her Majesty Queen Victoria in centre of back, rich drooping flowers down the sides ; "Convolvulus," "Thirlmere," "Blea Tarn," "Wastdale" (viola)—scenes from the Lake district ; "Ivy," and "King Edward VII."

The fame of Mayson two hundred years hence will be due more especially to his ordinary back, original model fiddles, however exalted as works of art the above may be. Many experts have expressed the opinion that fiddles of the "Hallé-Mayson" class will worthily replace the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Cremona, when the latter have become food for worms.

A grander fiddle than "Cordelia," *e.g.*, has never been made, never can be made. Another remarkable specimen is "Elephanta," which has only just been completed in London. This, in the opinion of two experts of eminence, is calculated to throw lustre even on Mayson's fame, though it is difficult to imagine how it can surpass his previous accomplishments. The tone of these instruments is most remarkable. In saying this it is not assumed that it is *now* equal in mellowness to that of the perfect Strads and Josephs left us, but it is maintained that it runs theirs very closely in quality, and most certainly excels that of most of them in power and breadth. It needs but age and careful use to develop the tonal qualities of these instruments to put many of the all-but-deified Strads entirely out of court.

Mr. Mayson names each instrument as he makes it, and in doing so he has followed a wise plan, seeing that it makes fraud more difficult. There are, in addition, numerous private marks here and there in the instrument. A clue as to the maker's method of inserting private marks may be found in his interesting book "The Stolen Fiddle."

The Mayson violins gained medals at Cork (1883), Inventions (1885), and Melbourne (1888). In the two former awards an originality in edging was specially mentioned as adding to the gracefulness of the work. This was a Grecian ogee between the purfling and the rims. His prices range from £10 to £60.

The label is a different one for each instrument. The following is a facsimile of one put in a fine violin.

Walter H. Mayson,
Manchester, Fecit
"Panope". 1903

3
x
2

Mr. Mayson is the author of "Colazzi," "The Heir of Dalton," "The Stolen Fiddle," "Violin-Making," and other works.

MEARES, RICHARD, London : 1660-80. A maker of lutes and viols.

MEARES, RICHARD, London : 1675-80(?). Son of the preceding. He made a few violins, but left the trade soon after his father's death.

MEEK, WILLIAM, Carlisle, contemporary. A gentleman amateur, who has made several beautifully-finished instruments.

MEIKLE, ROBERT, Lesmahagow : 1817-97. Average work.

MENTIPLY, ANDREW ADAM, Ladybank, Fife, contemporary. He was born at Burnside, Boarhills, near St. Andrews, Nov. 1, 1859. He is an amateur maker who displays so considerable an amount of ability and originality as to justify more than a passing notice of his work. He has made over fifty violins, a few of which are on the Stradivari and a few on the Guarneri models, but the majority of them are on an original model. The outline and arching of this original model are strongly reminiscent of those of Joseph, but the outline is more rounded, especially in the inner bouts or C's, and the lower or broad end is more extended. The scroll and sound-holes also differ materially from those of the great classics, the former being quaint and pleasing in effect, but the latter overdone and bordering on a caricature. Mr. Mentipty's intellectual orchard is exuberant in growth, but it wants pruning. The classics are not to be depreciated as a means of education, and much less as objects of worship. The workmanship and tone are excellent, but the varnish is very indifferent. If this maker exercised a little self-restriction and used better varnishes, he would turn out work that would

rank beside the best produced in Scotland to-day. Facsimile label :—

Andrew. A. Menzies
Ladybank. Gyle
1872/1907

MENZIES, JOHN, Falkirk : 1820-31. I have not seen any of his work, but it is said to be very good.

MERLIN, JOSEPH, London : 1765-80. Stainer model, fairly well made, but possessing a poor tone. The varnish is mostly dirty yellow or brown of an inferior quality. His mechanical pegs for violins and violoncellos were at one time in considerable use. Label :—

JOSEPHUS MERLIN CREMONAE EMULUS.

NO. 104. LONDINI, 1779. IMPROVED.

66 QUEEN ANN STREET EAST, PORTLAND CHAPEL

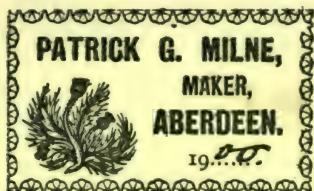
MIER, —, London : c. 1780.

MILLER, —, London : c. 1750.

MILLER, ALEXANDER, St. Andrews : 1813-77. A pupil of Thomas Hardie. I have seen only two of his violins, which were well-made instruments, possessing a firm but somewhat metallic tone. At his death Miller possessed a large quantity of excellent violin wood, which was secured by Mr. John Logan of Biggar.

MILLER, JOHN, Dundee, contemporary. He was born in the Orkneys, Sept. 18, 1861. His work is excellent, but there is so little of it that he cannot claim more than a passing notice.

MILNE, PATRICK J., Aberdeen, contemporary. He was born at Aberdeen, on Jan. 30, 1873. He follows the usual models, and has made about thirty violins, besides repairing a large number. He uses both oil and spirit varnishes; colours: orange, light and dark brown, and dark red. The workmanship is much above average, and the tone fairly good. He repairs very neatly, and has done considerable work now and again for some of the London houses. Facsimile label:—



MINER, D. BROWN, Dunfermline, contemporary. I have not seen any of his work.

MITCHELL, GEORGE, Edzell: 1823-97. I have not seen any of his work.

MITCHELL, JOHN, Dunfermline, contemporary.

MOFFATT, W. J.

MONK, JOHN KING, Lewisham, contemporary. He was born Jan. 22, 1846, and is a direct descendant of General Monk, of Commonwealth fame. He works on the Stradivari model, but he has slightly modified the outline, making the corners fuller and more prominent. The sound-holes are considerably modified, and although they have much force of character and a piquancy all their own, yet one is constrained to wish that the maker had rest content with his classical prototype. In the matter of workmanship, this maker is capable of doing better than he sometimes does.

He has used sundry sorts of wood, all of good quality. He

foraged Shoreditch cabinet-makers' stores some years ago for material, and stumbled across several slabs of maple and one of sycamore, which had lain by for generations till it had got very dark. Some portions of this were very handsome when cut up. The pine which he has used up to the present was taken from an old warehouse at the foot of London Bridge, built in 1830. This same warehouse was removed to another part in 1860, and in 1886-87 was taken down, when Mr. Monk took advantage of the opportunity of securing the wood that suited his purpose. He has used all this pine with the exception of some odd pieces, and two small blocks sufficient for two bellies.

His varnish is oil, and of various colours, ranging from deep red to golden yellow. It is perfectly transparent and fairly brilliant.

He is the inventor of the triple bar system, which he applies to worn-out old and to cheap modern factory fiddles. The system consists in the use of three bass bars instead of the usual one.

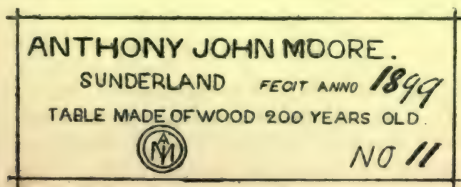
He has made up to date ninety violins and a few violas. Facsimile label :—



MOORE, ANTHONY JOHN, Sunderland, contemporary, was born in Monkwearmouth, in the year 1852. He is the eldest son of the late Captain Thomas Moore, at one time well known in the Indian and China trades. He was educated at the academy of the Rev. William Parks, in Ravensworth Terrace, Monkwearmouth, and also at the schools of Mr. James Cameron, in North Bridge Street, and of Mr. John Cameron, in Blandford Street, of the same place.

He is an artist by profession—a painter of the sea and tidal rivers. About fifteen years ago he first saw the work of Hart on the violin, and he was so much impressed with its many illustrations that he became enamoured with the king of instruments. In the year 1886 he made his first violin, and since then he has made a considerable number. He spends most of his leisure time in experimenting and in working out the geometrical construction of the instrument, with the view of by-and-by turning out fiddles that will be representative of all that is excellent in the modern school.

The one instrument of his make which I examined was beautifully made, and had a large and telling tone. Its outline and arching were on the Joseph model slightly modified. The wood of the front table was an extraordinary piece of timber, and seemed fresh, considering its great age. The scroll was nicely carved, but possessed more of the feminine characteristics than is perhaps allowable in copies of Joseph. The button was prim and prop. The margin was of medium width, and the edges gently rounded. The sound-holes were piquant and expressive. The varnish was an oil one of Mr. Moore's own composition; colour: golden yellow. I was particularly pleased with the tone of this instrument. It was perfectly clear and responsive in all the positions, and the harmonics were as crisp as the jingle of frozen rush blown by the breath of winter. I have no knowledge whether Mr. Moore is always equally successful in producing a good tone. Facsimile label:—



MORGAN, JAMES, Edinburgh, contemporary. He was born in Kincardine-on-Forth, in the year 1839. He was

apprenticed at the age of fourteen to a cabinet-maker, who was a first-class workman, and an occasional maker of all sorts of musical instruments made of wood, including violins. During apprenticeship he made about a dozen violins and one violoncello. Leaving Kincardine, he settled down in Edinburgh, where he made several violins of such excellent workmanship and tone that brought him quickly to the notice of some of the musicians of the town. At this period, however, he passed through a religious crisis, and violin-making and playing were cast aside for twenty-eight years. When he next took up the art he was considerably past the meridian of life, and had reached the age at which it is usual for men to cease from the harder activities of life. This does not imply that he does not now turn out instruments of a high order, but that they are few and far between. It is a pity that Morgan ever laid by his gouge, and especially so when it is considered that religious scruples were the cause. It was never intended that religion should rob art of its fruit.

He works on the Stradivari model, using very choice materials, and Whitelaw's varnish. The tone is large and mellow. Facsimile inscription :—

James Morgan
Maker
April 8-1900
Edinburgh

MORRISON, ARCHIBALD, Glasgow : 1820-95. He worked in Great Hamilton Street, where he had a violin shop, and where he made a large number of instruments, some fairly good, but most of rather under average merit. The little of his work that I have seen was of a very indifferent character. Morrison appears to have been a far better player than maker, and his shop was the rendezvous of fiddle enthusiasts and

players, who were known in Glasgow as "Morrison's Band."
Label :—

ARCHIBALD MORRISON,
MAKER,
GLASGOW, 1875

MORRISON, JAMES, Dunfermline, contemporary.
An amateur maker of average attainments.

MORRISON, JOHN, London: 1760–1827. He worked in Princes Street, Soho, in Shadwell, and at Little Turnstile, Holborn. I have never seen any instruments bearing his label. I think he must have worked exclusively for the dealers.

MURDOCH, ALEXANDER, Aberdeen: 1815–91.

MURRAY, DANIEL, Edinburgh, contemporary.
Ordinary work.

MURRAY, DAVID, Gorebridge, contemporary. He was born at Greeburn, Linlithgowshire, Dec. 30, 1850. He is an amateur maker of far more than average ability, and did circumstances but allow him to procure good material, he would turn out work which would be in every way excellent. As matters stand, Murray has often to rest content with any sort of timber he can pick up. When he does secure a piece of good wood, he spends months in fondly shaping it, and in tracing out of the inert block lines of living beauty. He works on an original model, or perhaps it would be more correct to say models, seeing that no two of his instruments are exactly alike. Each violin has an individuality of its own, and yet "David Murray" is writ large on the face of every one of them. The workmanship is faultless, and the tone has a peculiar crisp yet sweet quality which is novel and pleasing. He has made about sixty violins. Label :—

DAVID MURRAY,
MAKER,
GOREBRIDGE, 189—.

MURRAY, JAMES, Dumfries, contemporary. He was born at Lockerbie, July 11, 1857. An amateur maker of average ability.

MURRAY, JOHN BROWN, Clarebrand, contemporary. He was born at Ringanwhey, Kirkcudbrightshire, May 21, 1849. He has made several excellent violins on the Stradivari model. The work is beautifully finished, and the tone is bright and penetrating. Facsimile label :—

J.B. Murray
Clarebrand
18

N

NAYLOR, ISAAC, Headingley, Leeds : 1775-90. A pupil of Richard Duke ; and he has reproduced many of the salient features of the master in his work.

NEWTON, ISAAC, London : 1775-1825. He made mostly for the trade, particularly for Betts. Both workmanship and tone are of good average merit.

NICOL, THOMAS, Glasterlaw, contemporary. He was born in the parish of Kirkden, Forfarshire, June 10, 1840. He has made about sixty violins on the models of Stradivari and Guarneri. On his firsts efforts he used a spirit varnish, but he now uses Whitelaw's. The work is carefully done, and the tone is free and powerful. Label :—

T. NICOL,

18 MAKER 97

NISBET, WILLIAM, Lint Mill, Prestonkirk : 1828-1902. He was born at Stenton, Jan. 5, 1828, and died at

Lint Mill in 1902. He received no school education in early life, his father, who was a labouring man, giving him what home teaching he could. He was, however, possessed of wide information upon a variety of subjects, and distinguished in mechanical knowledge and skill. The Rev. G. Marjoribanks, vicar of Stenton, thus concludes his account of Nisbet's life and work in the *Haddington Courier*: "It is not too much to say that, in whatever direction he has turned his energies, he has always excelled. Few, indeed, would suppose that the modest-looking yet trim little cottage which stands near the picturesque ruins of the old mill, was occupied by a man possessed not only of rare technical skill, but of such accurate and extensive information, gathered mainly from personal observation and study in the fields of natural history and science, whether as a photographer, wood-carver, carpenter, basket-maker, violin-maker, or in more recent years as a market-gardener, the productions of his genius and labour have been equally admired and appreciated, and this none the less because accompanied by a singular modesty of character and demeanour, and without his having had the benefit of any special training and education. In short, if the well-known author of 'Self-Help' wishes to find solid material for a new biographical sketch, he could hardly do better than select for his theme the subject of this little notice."

Nisbet made 120 violins. The earlier ones are on the model of Maggini, and the later ones are said to be on the model of Amati, "with a broadened waist to give more tone." Those examined by me were not on the Amati model at all, the differences being so marked and numerous as to justify one in describing the model as original. The following measurements, taken from an instrument made in 1891, will bear out the last statement:—

Length of body	13 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	6 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
" " middle bouts	4 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
" " lower bouts	8 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
Distance between corners	3 $\frac{3}{16}$ "

Length of sound-holes	$2\frac{7}{8}$ inches.
Distance between sound-holes at top	$1\frac{3}{4}$ „
Depth of ribs at top and bottom	$1\frac{1}{4}$ „

The workmanship is excellent, and the tone large and telling. The only faulty part of the work is the varnish, which is a spirit one of a dull, lifeless colour. He was awarded two bronze medals for an exhibit of violins at the Edinburgh International Exhibition in 1886.

Nisbet used no label, but inscribed with a hard lead pencil on the back in the place where the label usually stands the following :—

*W^m Nisbet
Lint Mill.
1891*

NOBLE, HUGH, Dundee, contemporary. An amateur of good average ability.

NORBORN, JOHN, London : c. 1720.

NORMAN, BARAK, London : 1688–1740. A pupil of Thomas Urquhart, who worked in Bishopsgate and afterwards in St. Paul's Churchyard. I have not seen any violins of his make, but I have seen two violoncellos. Unfortunately, the notes of these instruments which I made at the time have been lost, and I cannot say anything about them from memory, but I have a distinct recollection that one had a most pleasing tone. The biographical particulars are familiar to all who are interested in violin literature, and need not be repeated here, seeing that I have nothing new to write about this maker.

NORRIS, JOHN, London : 1739–1818. A pupil of Thomas Smith, and for some time (1765–80) partner with Barnes.

O

OMOND, JAMES, Stromness, contemporary. He was born in Halkness, South Walls, June 23, 1833, and works as a professional maker at Kirbuster, Stromness, in the Orkneys. He received elementary education at a public school in his native place, and also at the parish school. At the age of sixteen he took charge of a small school in an adjacent island containing only seven families. Soon after he took charge of this school he found that he needed to be better equipped for the profession of a schoolmaster, so he attended the Stromness school at intervals, and also learned navigation. He finally equipped himself for his work at the Edinburgh Training College. After his college career he was appointed master of the society school in the parish of Stromness, where, through pressure of work, his health gave way. He completely lost his voice for eight years, and, after the passing of the Education Act of 1872, he was invalided on a limited pension. He now had to turn his attention to some other means of livelihood, and he picked up watchmaking and repairing. This was not congenial to his tastes, so he decided upon violin-making. To this art he has devoted his time and energies since the year 1873. That he wisely deliberated in his final choice of a calling is amply borne out by the success of his gouge. He succeeded almost from the first, for the mechanical part of the work gave him little or no difficulty. He had learned how to handle edged-tools at the workshop of his father, uncle, and brother, who were general carpenters and boat-builders, and he set about diligently to obtain knowledge of the science of violin construction by corresponding with such authorities as Mr. Horace Petherick, Mr. George Hart, &c. From the former of these gentlemen he got very valuable hints, and to him he is largely indebted for his success.

Mr. Omond was married in 1860 to Jane Groat, of South Walls. He has four sons and one daughter—James, John, Jane, William, and David. He is a genial old gentleman,

with a face beaming with Orcadian humour and a heart affectionately attached to the kirk of his forefathers.

He spends his time in the company of the great Antony and Joseph, with an occasional excursion to the lonely, weeping Gio. Paolo. He is not a slavish copyist; on the other hand, he sometimes modifies the lines and vaulting of the masters, and he not infrequently develops the scroll and sound-holes in a manner quite original. The outline measurements are nearly always identical with those of the archetypes, but the thickness of the plates is uniformly greater.

One noticeable feature about the sound-holes is the acute-ness of the inner angle of the lower wing. This, in a large majority of cases, is developed into a fine point, somewhat after the manner of Otto.

Up to the present he has made two hundred instruments, including violins, violas, and violoncellos.

The workmanship and finish are perfect—the greatest care being manifest even down to the minutest detail.

Mr. Omond's wood is excellent in quality and very often fine in appearance. The grain of the pine is moderately wide, and the "reed" well-defined and straight, showing a healthy growth. He often manages, in spite of his living at so great a distance from a good market, to hit upon a very good piece of sycamore or pine, which he knows well how to use.

Mr. Omond has never attempted to make his own varnish. Like a certain king we read of in olden times, he is blest with a sense which is rare amongst men, viz., the sense to know what cannot, as well as what can, be done. He has no knowledge of chemistry, and knows that it would be a waste of time for him to dabble at varnish-making. He uses Caffyn's, or some other good varnish, mostly in amber or orange. He lays it on very carefully, first preparing the surface of the wood to a fine polish, and then with a clean rag dipped in the pale varnish he puts on the first coat in a thin film, so as to prevent it soaking into the wood. The coloured varnish is also put on thin, and each coat allowed good time to dry.

Omond's instruments have gained the following awards :—
Diplomas of merit at Central International Exhibition, Mel-



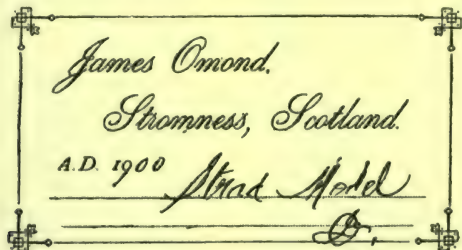
JOHN WILLIAM OWEN

bourne, 1888; International Exhibition, Edinburgh, 1890; East End Industrial Exhibition, Glasgow, 1891; National Trades and Industrial Exhibition, Glasgow, 1895-96. With the last he got a bronze medal, the highest award they gave.

It may also be mentioned that at the Fisheries Exhibition, Edinburgh, he obtained a silver medal and £5 for an essay on fishing-boats and a model of an improved boat.

He sells his instruments at a very moderate figure, ranging from £3 to £10. He plays well on the fiddle, though with him playing is subsidiary to making, and only taken up comparatively late in life for the purpose of testing his work.

Mr. Omond, it may fairly be asserted, is in the front rank of modern Scottish makers. His work is downright honest, unsophisticated, solid British work, and his devotion to the art will materially help to sustain the fame of Scottish violin-makers. Facsimile label :—



OWEN, JOHN WILLIAM, Leeds, contemporary. He was born in Leeds, May 28, 1852, and works at Amati House, Merrion Place, New Briggate. He is the only child of William and Hannah Owen, the father being a native of Congleton, and the mother of Chester. The latter, whose maiden name was Rimmer, was of a highly artistic turn of mind, and without a rival as a designer in fancy work. Owen received his early education at an elementary school in his native town, but it was discontinued at a stage which made it necessary for him to supplement it by attendance at scientific classes in the evenings later on in life.

He was apprenticed to the engineering trade, but the work proved too heavy for him and his health gave way. He was an invalid for about three years, and was obliged to get constant medical attendance. On recovering, his doctor advised him to give up all business except that of violin-making, which he had taken up as a hobby previous to his illness. He acted upon this advice, and as he gained in strength he took up the art of making and repairing more thoroughly. He spared no effort in gleaning information on the subject from every available source. He acquired both theoretical and practical knowledge from expert workmen, and he went to France, visiting one *atelier* after another, with the same object in view.

It sometimes happens that good comes out of evil. It is so in this instance: the ill-health of Mr. Owen is responsible for one more splendid addition to the roll of British fiddle-makers. We do not regret his severe illness provided that it has not shortened his thread of life, and that it will not, Phoenix-like, rise again from its own ashes.

He commenced violin-making in 1884, but the business at the start was not continuous. Since his recovery it has been carried on without intermission. Up till now he has made about a hundred new instruments, including violins, violas, and 'cellos. He has also made a large number of new backs and bellies for instruments belonging chiefly to dealers. He has repaired very extensively. He keeps a record of every instrument that passes through his hands, and the list stands now at 3721. He works on the Stradivari, Guarneri, and his own models. The fiddle submitted to me was original in outline and modelling. Its dimensions are:—

Length of body	14 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches.
Width of upper bouts	6 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
„ lower bouts	8 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
„ middle bouts	4 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
Length of inner bouts from corner to corner	3 "
Length of <i>f</i> holes	3 "
Height of ribs 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches, diminishing to .	$\frac{5}{32}$ "



VIOLIN BY JOHN W. OWEN

(Fecit 1903)

The outline of this fiddle is very pure and graceful, and every individual part is in perfect keeping with the whole. The margins are full and the edges strong, slightly raised, and beautifully rounded. The scroll is an exquisite piece of work; it is thrown with a masterly hand, and is full of refined strength. The interior is finished as carefully as the exterior. The blocks and lining are faultless, showing not the slightest trace of glue. The mitres of the fiddle examined by me were geometrically perfect, having facets of nearly a millimetre in width. This style, it must be conceded, is more in keeping with the outline than the "knife-edge" facet. The wood is excellent. The curl of the maple is of narrow width and very regular, and running at an angle of thirty degrees to the long axis of the fiddle. The front table has been cut from a slab that obtained a prize for excellence at the 1851 Exhibition, and it has a "reed" of medium width. Mr. Owen was fortunate in being able to purchase a considerable quantity of Exhibition wood, and is thus enabled to put superior material in his higher class instruments. The varnish is an oil one, of the maker's own composition; colours: yellow to deep red. In the specimen examined by me it was a rich red with a golden tinge, very brilliant and transparent. The chief characteristics of this maker's tone are breadth and brilliancy. It is a tone which, when time has mellowed it, will subdue by reason of its grandiose timbre. The awe-inspiring and the grand are required in the realm of sound as in that of form.

Perhaps Mr. Owen claims attention even more on account of his violoncellos than his fiddles. In Mr. Arthur Broadley's opinion, these stand alone of their kind in the midst of modern productions. He says: "The latest 'cello is beyond everything. In workmanship it is perfect; in tone nothing better could be desired—big, brilliant, and of good carrying power, easy to play on at every part of the instrument." The 'cello to which Mr. Broadley refers is of fine proportions, and slightly higher in model than the earlier ones. Mr. Owen made about two years ago a 'cello for Mr. David Dixon, 'cellist at the Theatre Royal, Bradford. The instrument was very recently seen by Mr. Van Biene, and said to be worth at present £150.

Mr. Owen makes bows, violins, violas, violoncellos, and double-basses. All the work is personal. He employs no workmen, but he is assisted in the workroom by his daughter, Ivy. His prices are a trifle more moderate than is usual in these days of high figures. They are :—

For violins	from £12
For violas	” £15
For 'cellos	” £20

He was married to Miss Jane E. Beresford in December 1879, in York. Their offspring are :—Leonora Beresford, Jenny Stella, Ivy Rimmer, Adelina, and Paulina. In private life he is amiable and blameless. In his art he is an enthusiast. To the outsider he may seem to be crazy on the subject of violin-making. He has a firm belief in his own powers, and has the conviction that he has found his vocation in the making of stringed instruments. This gentle egotism is not to be condemned ; it is a psychical state in which the mind of every *born* luthier is bound to find itself. And herein lies the test between the born artist and the artist that is made.

Mr. Owen has played the violin from childhood, and has also studied harmony and composition from an early age.

He gave violin lessons at one time, and enjoyed a considerable reputation as a teacher. He for some time also acted as deputy leader at the local theatres when occasion required. Facsimile label :—



A fine violin, made on an original model, is shown here.



DANIEL PARKER VIOLIN

(In the Collection of Mr. C. CLOSE, Dagmar Lodge)





VIOLIN BY DANIEL PARKER

(Fecit 1712)

(Now in the possession of Mr. RICHARD HILTON, Matlock Bridge)

The label is not dated, but the date is inscribed on the bare wood after the maker's autograph.

P

PAMPHILON, EDWARD, London : 1670-90. The instruments of this old maker are a sort of cross-breed between those of Brescia and Absam. He had evidently seen and handled instruments of both schools, and became consequently unsettled in his mind as to what course to pursue. The outline, scroll, and double purfling are Brescian, but the arching is distinctly Tyrolese. The workmanship considered *per se* is excellent, but it is devoid of taste, and in a few matters of detail, to wit, the terminals of the sound-holes, it seeds into eccentricity. His tenors, like his violins, are of a small pattern, but their tone is sweet and penetrating. He used amber yellow varnish of good quality, which in many cases looks well and almost fresh to-day. I doubt whether there are any Pamphilon instruments in existence bearing original labels.

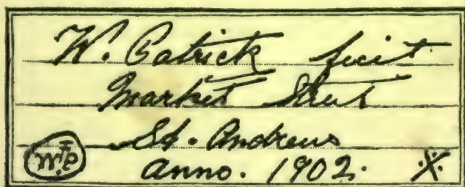
PARKER, DANIEL, London : 1700-45. The information which is usually given respecting this maker is misleading, and most writers content themselves with repeating early errors in almost the same words. Hart, Haweis, and Miss Stainer give his period as being 1740-85, and Fleming as 1715-85. As a matter of fact they are all wrong. There are undoubtedly genuine examples of his work bearing the dates 1712, 1719, 1726, and 1732 still in existence. The earliest which I have seen is dated 1712, a specimen which has been pronounced genuine by the Messrs. Hart, and also by the Messrs. Hill. It is on the long Strad model, slightly modified, and with a rather doubtful scroll. Mr. Richard Hilton, of Derby House, Matlock Bridge, is the owner of this interesting instrument, and for the illustrations (see opposite) of this earliest known example of Parker I have to tender him my sincere thanks. It has been surmised that Parker was the

pupil of Pamphilon, or of Urquhart, or of both, but on what ground it is difficult to understand, as there is not the remotest resemblance between his work and that of either of these. It is not necessary to suppose that he was a pupil of anybody, for he was a born artist, and endowed with natural mechanical skill. Given an artistic mind and an aptitude for tools, and a man may by hard work and perseverance develop into a first-class luthier without undergoing the usual routine of long apprenticeship. Parker's instruments are typical examples of British work of the classical period. They embody the strong points of those who may be considered to be above him, as well as some of the weak points of those who were below him. He was a good maker, but only a moderately good copyist. His fiddles will never pass as Italians, because they are too thoroughly British in character. Strongly built, honest, and unpretending in demeanour, they should prove to be objects of uncommon interest to the connoisseur. Parker copied (or tried to copy) Stainer, Stradivari, and N. Amati. The workmanship is much the same throughout; free, firm, and rugged, with little or no feminine gracefulness smiling from its lines. The varnish is of excellent quality, tender, and of various reddish shades, sometimes a little thick and dull. His tone has much the same characteristics as that of Banks. Comparatively few of this maker's instruments bear his label. He was a man who lived in the future, and who sacrificed immediate reputation as much as the exigencies of time and tide would allow him. He evidently did not worry about fame, and was content to dispose of his ware to the trade. Had he worked his plates thinner, and thought it worth his while to copy the reigning god (Stainer) more closely, he doubtless would have attracted universal patronage. But Daniel was of a philosophical turn of mind, and gave to the world the milk of wisdom rather than the sweets of fancy. What is considered to be the finest Parker violin in existence is owned by Clarkson Close, Esq., of Dagmar Lodge, Leeds. This is also on the long Strad lines (see illustration), with red amber oil varnish, and a magnificent scroll.

This example is considered by the Messrs. Hill to belong to the year 1700, or thereabouts. I would urge that in point of detail and general effect it resembles much more the instruments made in 1726 than it does those made in 1712 and 1715. Parker made his best instruments from about 1720 to 1727. The tone of this instrument is bright, clear, and powerful.

PATERSON, JAMES, Edinburgh : 1834-98. A cabinet-maker by trade. He made copies of Guarnerius, and also very good ones of the "Count Cessol" Stradivari in the possession of Mr. W. Croall. He used Dr. Inglis Clark's varnish. He obtained a bronze medal for a case of violins at the Edinburgh Exhibition, 1890.

PATRICK, WILLIAM, St. Andrews, contemporary. He was born at St. Monance, Fife, in 1872. A beginner who promises to turn out good work by-and-by. He handles his tools well, but has several mistakes to rectify in matters of style, &c. Facsimile label :—



PAYNE, R., South Shields, contemporary.

PEARCE, GEORGE, London : 1820-56. Worked with S. A. Forster.

PEARCE, JAMES & THOMAS, London : 1780-1810. Brothers. They worked in Peter Street, Saffron Hill. Indifferent work.

PEARCE, WILLIAM, London : nineteenth century. Average work.

PEMBERTON, EDWARD, London : c. 1660. I have not seen or heard of anybody living who professes to have seen violins by Pemberton. Some have written as though they had seen numerous examples of Pemberton's art, but I have inquired diligently for the last twenty years for definite particulars, and none are forthcoming. The legend of the "Earl of Leicester" violin has been laid to rest long ago.

PERRY & WILKINSON, Dublin : 1780-1830. Some of their instruments are excellent as regards workmanship and tone, and ought to be diligently sought and carefully kept. I saw one years ago at Fishguard, which was on the grand Stradivari model, with golden red varnish, and a sweet, liquid tone. No doubt it has found its way to some dust heap long ago.

PICKARD, HANDEL, Leeds : nineteenth century. I can give no particulars of his life or work.

PINE, —, London : nineteenth century.

PLANE, WALTER, Glasgow : 1804-79. Stradivari model. The workmanship is good, but the varnish is a hard spirit one, and the tone loud and piercing. Label :—

WALTER PLANE,
GLASGOW,
1860

POWELL, ROYAL & THOMAS, London : 1770-1800. Two brothers who did most of their work for William Forster and his son. Careful workmanship, but rather weak tone.

PRESTON, —, London : c. 1720.

PRESTON, JOHN, York : 1780-1800. He was capable of turning out very good work, but most of his remains show

carelessness. The line is not at all bad. Labels (there were several, of which the following is one):—

JOHN PRESTON,
FECIT, YORK, 1789

PRIESTLEY, A. W., Leeds, contemporary.

PRIESTNALL, JOHN, Rochdale: 1819–99. He was born at Saddleworth, near Oldham, in Nov. 1819, and died at Rochdale, Jan. 18, 1899. He was originally a joiner and pattern-maker, and noted as an ingenious workman, and the discoverer of several improvements in wood-working machines. He worked occasionally at violin-making in early life, but in 1870 he began to devote the whole of his time to it, and the remaining years of his life was spent as a professional maker. At the time of his death he had completed three hundred violins, thirty violas, six 'cellos, and eight double-basses. His instruments are well finished, and possess considerable originality. His wood is mostly regular in figure, cut on the quarter, with the curl running at right angles to the long axis. The sound-holes are quaint, but pleasing.

The scroll is thrown with a decided hand. The edges are full and rounded, and the purfling nicely inlaid. The varnish is an oil one; colour, deep golden amber. It is transparent, elastic, and tender—rather too tender, seeing that a fiddle which was made in 1884 is not yet quite hard-dry in 1902. One suspects that a varnish which does not thoroughly set in eighteen years will never set at all. Apart from this one defect, the varnish is very beautiful. It is laid on in about half-a-dozen coats, and nicely polished. The tone is large and telling, and possesses much of the Italian oiliness, but it is rather viola-like on the lower strings. I am told this is a characteristic of all his instruments. Nevertheless it is a highly respectable tone, and stamps Priestnall as a maker of no ordinary ability. Had he been more conversant with Italian work of the first rank, no doubt some of the three hundred odd examples of his art which he left behind him would be eagerly sought after to-day by orchestral players.

As a repairer Priestnall was justly famed. Instruments came to him from all parts, and he repaired hundreds of all descriptions, mostly of the English and French schools. He had a fertile brain, and his genius was very assertive in inventing contrivances when working at an awkward repair. Not only was repairing to him a fine art, but the method of working was also regarded by him as an art. He studied *means* as well as *ends*.

Old Mr. Hill, of Wardour Street, is reported to have said that a good maker ought to be able to make a fiddle with a knife and fork, albeit he himself used the finest tools in his repairing, made from the best metal.

Priestnall did not believe in "knife and fork" repairing. He would patiently spend hours over a contrivance that would methodically ensure an artistic finish to a job. There is ample room to-day for more men of his stamp. Artistic repairers are few and far between. There are not above half-a-dozen scientific repairers in Great Britain at the present time, whereas there are at least two hundred makers, professional and amateur, exclusive of manufacturers of the ordinary trade fiddle.

Priestnall was a very genial and generous man. He had the sense of humour also if the following tale be true. It is related that he once "faked" an Italian fiddle in order to test the powers of a well-known London expert. He carefully prepared his "bait," clapped a Storioni ticket into it, and sent it up for opinion. The instrument came back with a certificate duly attesting that the fiddle was genuine as labelled.

Priestnall was much amused over the credulity of the "big gun," as he called him. The incident is not impossible. I know a maker of "Old Italian" instruments residing at present not one hundred miles from Manchester, who by his cunning and deftness continually practises his black art upon the experts. He recently turned out a splendid Panormo and a Grancino which completely deceived a high priest of the art. *Quis judicet ipsos criticos?*

Priestnall was an old-fashioned player on the violin, and in his young days was much in request at country weddings,

fairs, &c. He sold his instruments at £4, but some of them have been recently sold at double the price.

His instruments bear no label, but the maker's name is stamped on the wood with a cold punch in several places, and the number of the instrument is stamped on the button.

R

RAE, JOHN, Battersea, contemporary. He was born in Duff Street, Macduff, N.B., Oct. 31, 1847. He is the eldest son of James Rae, and the eldest grandson of John Rae, of Forglen, Turriff, well-known throughout the northern parts of Scotland as a famous maker of bagpipes. This last-named John Rae died in 1857, aged ninety.

Soon after the birth of young Rae the family removed to Turriff, and resided there until his father became tenant of the Carpenter's Croft, Netherdale. This was in 1856. The boy Rae was for some time a pupil of a Mr. Ingram, at a private school in Turriff, and got on well there till the fates decreed his removal. From Netherdale he attended the school of Inverkeithny, and subsequently Aberchirder and Marnoch schools, but only for a short time. When he was about eleven years of age a misfortune happened to the family, which, no doubt, changed the whole course of his life. They were burned out of hearth and home. The father was from home at the time on business, and in the twilight of an autumn day a gleam of light was seen in an outhouse where some sheaves of corn, the last of the crop, had been taken in the previous night. Disaster was sudden. The father returned just in time to see the last of the premises, which were in a sheet of flame—corn stacks, workshop, wood-rack, tools, and furniture, all but precious life was lost. Mr. Rae, who was not by any means a rich man before, was left now a very poor man indeed, with a family of six to maintain. The inevitable followed. Young Rae was taken from school and put to serve an apprenticeship as a joiner. At the age of twenty he went to Edinburgh, and worked there at his

trade, and attended evening classes for mathematics and drawing. In 1869 he returned to Netherdale owing to failing health. It was soon after this that he essayed to make his first violin—a project carried out for the purpose of experiment, under the impetus of a theory then recently broached of a certain relation between proportionate form and musical sounds.

In 1873 he regained health and came to London, hoping to find employment as a violin-maker. He found to his dismay that violin-making as a trade was *non est* in the metropolis, but to soothe his feelings he attended lectures on acoustics at the South Kensington Museum, and did considerable experimenting on the tonal qualities of different woods.

In 1883 he got an appointment in the British Museum (Natural History), which relieved him of the drudgery of the bench. In 1884 he was married, and his wife sympathising with him in his weakness for fiddle-making, the passion for caliper and gouge broke out afresh. From 1884 to 1890 he studied the construction of the fiddle, and made moulds, models, templates, &c. Since 1890 all his spare moments have been given to his hobby, and up to the present he has made fifty-one violins and four violas. He is a slow, patient, and extremely careful worker, turning out only two or three instruments in the year. He is an artist in the highest sense of the word, and spends days over that which most makers spend only hours or minutes. His outline and model are original and highly artistic. The curves are pronounced, yet nervously delicate. His wood is magnificent. For several of his front tables he has used fine grained pine, without joint, cut from a gigantic tree grown in California. This was a tree of the species known as *Sequoia Gigantea*. It was 276 feet in height, and the annual rings proved it to be 1335 years old when cut down in 1872. It is very unconventional to use this wood, but the results show that conventionalism is sometimes on the erring path.

The outline is grand and elegant. A very noticeable feature is the balance between the upper and lower portions

of the instrument. The outline is considerably fuller at the upper bouts than is ordinarily the case. The C's are less angular and more sweetly extended and rounded than in any but the best Italian work.

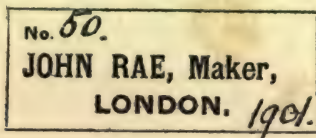
The scroll is original in design and beautiful in execution. It is prim and poised. Its swell and bent are like the neck of a proud swan, and it is worthy of the hand of a Stradivari.

The button is of medium size, rather too long to be described as "rounded." The corners are full and fine, as befits the outline.

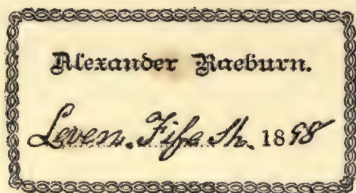
The purfling is inlaid without a tremor. In some specimens it is of the usual description; in others the middle strip is narrow—so narrow that it is hardly perceptible at the distance of a few feet from the instrument. The arrangement is well calculated to emphasise the beautiful outline of the fiddle. The maker is careful, however, to varnish the instrument in one of the lighter shades when he purfles in this way.

The conception of the whole build is grand and simple. Majesty intoxicated with the wine of the Graces! The tone is large, rich, and free. The instruments with bellies of the Californian giant have a distinct timbre, and their tone may be described as rich and ringing. Perhaps it has not the oiliness of the tone of Italian wood, but it has something else which is equally necessary to the harmony of sounds.

Mr. Rae sells his instruments at £10. This sum is no indication of the artistic merits of the instruments, for they are in the front rank of modern work. It is a pity he does not make faster. On that matter, however, he has a word to say:—"I hope to live to swell the number considerably, but I may say, as the banker-poet Rogers is reported to have said, 'I would rather go down to posterity as a diamond than as a ton of coals.'" Facsimile label:—



RAEBURN, ALEXANDER, Leven, Fife, contemporary. I have not seen any of his work, but it is said that his instruments are very good. Facsimile label :—



RAEBURN, GEORGE R., West Calder, contemporary. He was born at Largoward, near St. Andrews, April 4, 1846. He works on the Stradivari and Guarneri models, using excellent wood and a good oil varnish of his own composition. The workmanship is beautiful, and the tone very good. Mr. Raeburn was one of the favoured few who were invited some years ago by Mr. Crawford, of Edinburgh, to see the "Messie" Strad, and a vivid impression of the glories of the prince of fiddles are among the most treasured of his recollections. Up to the present he has made about fifty instruments, charging from £4 to £4, 10s. for work that is honestly worth double the money, as prices go. Facsimile label :—

GEORGE R. RAEBURN, *fecit*,
West Calder. A.D. 18

RAEBURN, JOHN, Largoward, contemporary. He was born in the Parish of Carnbee, Feb. 19, 1833, and is the eldest brother of the Alexander and George Raeburn previously mentioned. He has made about one hundred violins on the usual models, and also repaired a large number of instruments. The workmanship is of good average merit, and the tone good. He uses his brother's varnish, which is of a golden orange colour.

RAMSAY, WILLIAM, Biggar, contemporary. An amateur who has made a few instruments on the Stradivari model.

RAWLINS, —, London : c. 1770-80.

REED, B., Durham, contemporary. I have not seen any of his work.

RICHARDS, EDWIN, London : nineteenth century.

RILEY, HENRY, Liverpool, contemporary. He works at 8 Edge Grove, Fairfield, and produces good instruments both as regards workmanship and tone.

RITCHIE, ARCHIBALD, Dundee : 1833-1902. He was born at Woodend, Banchory, Aberdeenshire, Oct. 3, 1833, and died in Dundee in 1902, of blood-poisoning. He made over one hundred and fifty violins of excellent workmanship and tone on the model of a large Joseph Guarnerius. The work is thoroughly British in character—sober and solid. In some instances he slightly exaggerated the proportions of Del Gesù, but the result is never displeasing, the artistic sense being too highly developed in Ritchie to tolerate anything bordering on the grotesque. He used Whitelaw's varnish, mostly of a red, or golden red colour. He was in the front rank of modern Scottish makers, and his beautiful work will be highly valued in the future.

[N.B.—A further analysis of this maker's work will be given in the next edition. Unfortunately the notes containing full particulars of his life and work have been mislaid.]

ROOK, JOSEPH, London : 1775-1830. He made fairly good copies of Stainer and Amati, on the Forster lines. The tone in some instances was very good.

ROSS, DONALD, Edinburgh, contemporary. He was born in Ederton, Ross-shire, Feb. 1, 1817. He has made about fifty violins on the Maggini model. The workmanship

and tone in his best work are of average merit. Ross claims to have repaired over a thousand instruments in his time, although he does not work professionally. He is a kind old gentleman, of very modest demeanour.

ROSS, JOHN, London: c. 1560-1600. A maker of lutes and viols.

RUDDIMAN, JOSEPH, Aberdeen: 1760-1800. I regret that I have never succeeded in coming across a single specimen of this maker's work. It would be easy, but not to the purpose, to rewrite what others have written about him.

S

SAUNDERS, S., Twickenham, contemporary. He was born at Winterbourne, Dauntsey, on April 27, 1840. He was educated at the village National School, and remained at his native place till he was twenty years of age. He then entered the service of the South-Western Railway Company at Nine Elms, and, after shifting about to various places, eventually settled at Twickenham. He made his first violin in 1883, since which time he has been constantly engaged with the gouge and calipers, producing several really good instruments, although he still ranks himself as an amateur. He makes on three different models, two of Strad and one of Joseph. Many years ago he was fortunate in procuring the friendship of Dr. Selle of Richmond, through whose instrumentality he was enabled to see and examine several Italian instruments. Dr. Selle was himself the owner of a fine long Strad, which was always at the service of Mr. Saunders, and the several copies which he has made of this fiddle are highly creditable.

Mr. Saunders exhibited four violins at the Surbiton Industrial Exhibition, held in 1889, and was awarded the silver medal. The judge, M. L. de Edgvil, bought one of these instruments at £5, 10s. He uses no label, but stamps his



name in Roman characters on the bare wood of the back outside under the button.

SHAW, JOHN, London : c. 1650.

SHAW, J., Manchester, contemporary.

SHAW, THOMAS, Cove, contemporary. An amateur of good average ability.

SHEPHERD, H. G., Brighton, contemporary.

SHEPLEY, GEORGE, Bristol : nineteenth century.

SHERDON, DANIEL, Gloucester : nineteenth century. Indifferent.

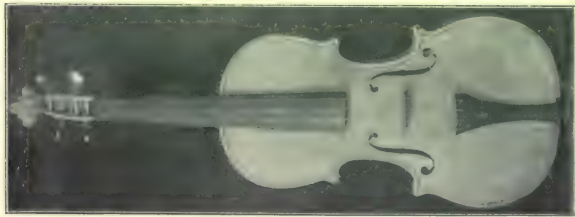
SHROSBREE, HENRY JAMES, Adelaide, S. Australia, contemporary. In the opinion of Australian experts, this maker produces work which is of quite an exceptional character. I am not in a position to either endorse or dispute that claim, and I therefore reproduce here an article written in the April number of *Music* (an Adelaide monthly), 1897, giving an account of the life and work of this maker :—

“Mr. H. J. Shrosbree, of Adelaide, known as a maker and repairer of violins of exceptional ability, was born in London in December 1858. From 1872 till the end of 1880 he followed a seafaring life, voyaging to Adelaide for the second time in the latter year, when he entered the service of Sir E. T. Smith, and remained with him till his retirement from business. Mr. Shrosbree does not claim to belong to a family of violin-makers, as his father was a taxidermist, in whose art the subject of this notice also duly qualified. On leaving Sir Edwin Smith's employ, Mr. Shrosbree entered that of Mr. Lawrence, the well-known Adelaide taxidermist, who says of him that he understands all branches of this work. Ample proof of this was seen in 1891, when he was awarded first prize and certificate of merit for a very fine exhibit at the Adelaide Exhibition of Art and Industry. But the violin,

Mr. Shrosbree's favourite musical instrument, has had a great charm for him through life, and all his spare time for years was spent in the study of music and the mechanism of the violin. He has made some excellent specimens, which were awarded first prize and certificate of merit for workmanship, model, and tone at the 1895 Exhibition of Art and Industry in Adelaide. That year's competition in violins was the largest yet held in Australia. Mr. Shrosbree is a practical musician and good violinist, and as an expert on model and tone is able to tell at a glance the method to adopt for restoring an old instrument. The profession recognise him both as a skilful repairer and a maker unrivalled in Australia, and as a self-taught man he is to be congratulated on his success. His instruments produce a fine rich Italian tone.

"He has invented a 'relieving bar system' for repairing violins, by which the bars must be located with mathematical accuracy. After years of labour and considerable cost Mr. Shrosbree has discovered the varnish which he uses on his violins, and which is pronounced by experts to be second to none. Besides a valuable testimonial signed by many of the leading musicians of Adelaide, in which Mr. Shrosbree is recognised as a practical musician and first-class violin-maker, he holds others from a number of eminent artists and well-known members of the profession."

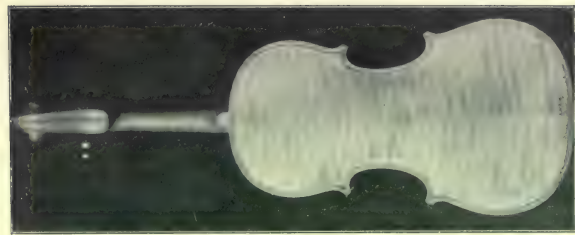
An eminent critic writes of one of Shrosbree's violins as follows: "A severe trial of Mr. Shrosbree's latest violin reveals the fact that a more perfect or finely-finished instrument it would seem almost impossible to possess. It is fuller in model than any of his previous ones, giving to it that sonorous tone-quality which is all the more surprising when on playing in the different positions (even to the highest of them) it does not affect that gentle refinement of tone when any delicacy is required. This important feature is not generally the case with new violins. The archings are most beautifully worked out, pronouncing it by its appearance a product of art. In quality of tone the lower strings resemble the rich qualities of the clarinet in all its power and endurance, while the notes



(FRONT)



(SIDE)



(BACK)

FINE VIOLIN BY H. J. SHROSBREE

(*Petit* 1899)

throughout the A and E strings are particularly clear and brilliant. In fact, it seems difficult to believe when playing upon it that the tones produced are not those from a well-matured instrument. The art of purfling has always been a time of anxiety to a maker when finishing his work. But in this Mr. Shrosbree is remarkably clever, laying it in so finely as to make it almost impossible to believe that such delicate work can be accomplished by hand. The wood is of the finest, specially imported for Mr. Shrosbree by Messrs. S. Marshall & Sons, and when varnished should look very handsome."

The editor of *Music*, referring to Mr. Shrosbree's success at the Adelaide Exhibition, 1900, spoke of the award as follows :—

"The commendatory references we have from time to time made to Mr. H. J. Shrosbree's skill as a luthier, have been very amply confirmed by the judges for musical instruments, &c., at the Century Exhibition (Messrs. Hermann Schrader, A. C. Quin, and Thos. Grigg). Mr. Shrosbree's exhibit comprised his Nos. 7 and 8 violins, his recently constructed viola, and some assorted bridges. With their brilliant coatings of oil amber varnish the instruments certainly make a splendid show, and the awards given Mr. Shrosbree are as follow : First for violins, first for viola, first for musical appliances (bridges), and a special prize for the best exhibit in its group."

Mr. Shrosbree charges, and, it would appear, receives readily, the high price of £50 for a violin. He makes a speciality of bridges, made of very old wood. I use one of these, and I like it very much. Facsimile label :—

Henry James Shrosbree, faciebat

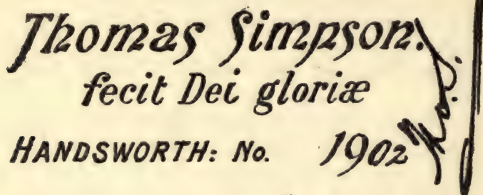
Adelaide, S. Australia, Anno 18



SIMPSON, JAMES & SON, London : 1780-1800. I cannot discover that they were actual makers, but only dealers who employed others to make for them.

SIMPSON, THOMAS, Handsworth, contemporary. He was born at Burnley, Dec. 28, 1866, and works at 55 Thornhill Road, Handsworth. His model is original. The workmanship is good, and the tone bright and clear. I do not care for his varnish. His wood is excellent both in appearance and tonal qualities. Facsimile label :—

Thomas Simpson.
fecit Dei gloriæ
 HANDSWORTH: No. 1902



SINCLAIR, WILLIAM, New Pitsligo, contemporary. An amateur who turns out excellent work as regards tone. His one fault is that he exaggerates the salient features of Guarnerius in his copies of that *maestro*. This is a common fault with many Scottish makers.

SKEFFINGTON, WILLIAM KIRKLAND, Glasgow, contemporary. Average merit.

SMILLIE, ALEXANDER, Glasgow, contemporary. He was born at Hallside, Cambuslang, Jan. 25, 1847. His workshops are at 130 Shamrock Street, and 514 Victoria Street, Glasgow, where also he carries on extensive business as a repairer and dealer. He is the son of John and Margaret Smillie. He was married April 27, 1876, to Janet Andrews, at Cordonald, near Paisley. He has six children—three sons and three daughters—viz., John, Andrew, Alexander, Margaret, Nellie, and Bessie.

The second son, Andrew, has started work with him since the recent opening of the new premises in the West end. Mr. Smillie received elementary education at the Cambuslang Parish School, but he received no early training in the art of violin-making. His first instrument was not made till 1889,



Alex. Smith

but since then he has been pretty busy, seeing that he has turned out 160 violins, 15 violas, and 13 violoncellos. These instruments show excellent work, and they place Smillie in the front rank of modern makers.

He works on the Stradivarius and Guarnerius lines, but he is not a mere copyist.

The measurements of the outline and model after which he most frequently works are as follows :—

Length of body	$14\frac{1}{8}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	$6\frac{5}{8}$ "
" " middle bouts	$4\frac{1}{2}$ "
" " lower bouts	$8\frac{1}{4}$ "
Length of C's	3 "
" " sound-holes, from wing angle to wing angle	$2\frac{1\frac{5}{10}}{10}$ "
Depth of ribs at bottom	$1\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " top	$1\frac{7}{8\frac{1}{2}}$ "
Elevation of back and belly—from $\frac{1}{2}$ in. to	$\frac{9}{16}$ "
Distance between sound-holes at top	$1\frac{2\frac{5}{8}}{8\frac{1}{2}}$ "

Mr. Smillie cuts his backs on the various methods, according to the nature of the wood he happens to be using. In two of the instruments examined by me it was cut on the slab, and it is difficult to imagine anything more beautiful than the effect produced. When the fiddle is held horizontally, the eye is dazzled by cloud-like coruscations of golden sheen ; and when it is tilted to an angle of forty-five degrees, the clouds are metamorphosed into a hundred "milky ways." Given a piece of suitable wood, of ample width, a back cut on the slab is second to none in artistic merits.

This maker uses old wood, especially for the front tables, and, as he is able to test it acoustically, it is invariably of excellent quality. The grain of some of the pine is very wide. In an example now before me, it is exactly $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch wide towards the margins—straight, and well-defined. On either side of the finger-board, and running into the long axis of the sound-holes, is a narrow line of light-brown stain, extending right along the instrument. The stain was probably produced

by an unusual colouring of the cambium cells during growth. As several of Mr. Smillie's instruments show traces, more or less pronounced, of this stain, their tables must have been cut from the same piece of timber.

The outline combines the graceful and the bold. The waist is full, and rapidly extending in width as it approaches the lower bouts. This gives a sense of solidity to the build as it also adds to the firmness and roundness of tone. The arching is moderately full and extended. The upper bouts are more rounded than is usual with Strad, but a nice balance is thus obtained between the upper and middle parts of the instrument.

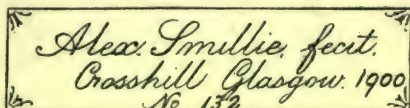
The scroll is magnificently sculptured. The coulisses or grooves round the back and head are deep, and the lines very sharp. The lines of the volute are also sharp and cut with mathematical precision. The throat is as carefully finished as the head. The peg-box is strong, with sides about $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch thick. The scollop projects a trifle more than it usually does in Italian instruments, but it befits the scroll. The button is of medium size and in the best classical style. The sound-holes are simply beautiful. They are moderately wide, and just a shade shorter than the grand period holes of Strad. The upper turns are also rather smaller, but very pretty. They are set farther away from the edge than is usual with Strad, and about $\frac{1}{16}$ (or more) of an inch lower down, and they do not incline so much—the angle of inclination being about eighty degrees. The sound-holes are set in with a true artistic feeling, and the effect produced on the mind in viewing the general appearance of the front table is that of repose and freedom.

The purfling is inlaid with accuracy. The margins are of medium width, and the edges strong and rounded. The depth of the edge is $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch, and it is raised about $\frac{1}{16}$, culminating midway between the outer line and the purfling in a very pretty and gentle ridge. The corners are in the style of Riechers, with the "wasp's sting" of the purfling reaching very nearly to the inner angles.

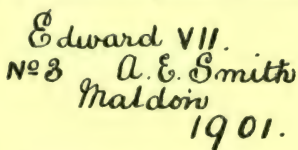
Mr. Smillie's 'cellos are considered to be equal to, if not

better than, his violins. Their tone is grand and mellow, and remarkably free and full on all the positions.

Mr. Smillie has never exhibited any of his instruments. He is a patient, unassuming worker, and the spirit of rivalry is foreign to his nature. His rare humour and genial manner have made him numerous friends in the great fiddle world. Facsimile label :—



SMITH, A. E., Maldon, contemporary. A young beginner whose work is full of excellent promise. Facsimile label :—



SMITH, ALEXANDER HOWLAND, Edinburgh, contemporary. Stradivari and Guarneri models. Good tone. Label :—

ALEXANDER HOWLAND SMITH,
EDINENSIS,
HOC FECIT, 1898

SMITH, HENRY, London : c. 1630. A maker of viols.

SMITH, JOHN, Glasgow, contemporary. He was born at Fauldhouse, Linlithgowshire, April 26, 1859, and he works now at 40 Garthland Drive, Dennistoun, Glasgow. He worked for ten years at 28 Cockburn Street, Falkirk, where he made about fifty violins and a few violas and violoncellos. He is a pupil of John Carr, music teacher and violin-maker, of Falkirk. Mr. Smith is amongst the three or four who form the vanguard of the army of modern Scottish makers. He

works on various models, but chiefly on one of his own adoption, the measurements of which are as follows :—

Length of body	14 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	6 $\frac{11}{16}$ "
" " middle bouts	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
" " lower bouts	8 $\frac{5}{16}$ "
Length of sound-holes	3 $\frac{1}{16}$ "
" " C's	3 $\frac{1}{16}$ "
Depth of lower rib	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " upper rib	1 $\frac{3}{16}$ "

The arching is a trifle more pronounced than in the works of Strad and Joseph, and is almost in the manner of Gasparo da Saló. There is also a strong Brescian feeling about the sound-holes, only they are of a type distinctly more advanced than those of the old school. The angle of inclination of the sound-holes, and their quasi-Gothic upper arch, lend this part of the work freshness and vigour which catch the eye of the expert.

The work is beautifully finished, and the varnish carefully laid on and highly polished. A feature worthy of special notice is the shoulder, or base of neck, which is finished in a manner that enables the player to shift with comfort and ease. Too much attention cannot be paid to violin construction from the player's point of view, with due regard, of course, to the harmony of form and proportion. Mr. Smith's scroll is a magnificent piece of carving, and reveals strength of mind and mastery of the gouge. The tone is large and incisive, and when time and use have mellowed it down, it will, no doubt, be rich and sonorous. Facsimile label :—

MADE BY

JOHN SMITH,

FALKIRK.

No. 50 March 1899

The colour of the label paper is dark yellow.



JOHN SMITH

SMITH, JOHN HEY, Burnley, contemporary. I have not seen any of his work.

SMITH, NATHANIEL, Bristol, contemporary. Indifferent.

SMITH, PYE, Hereford, contemporary. Fairly good work, but poor tone.

SMITH, THOMAS, London: 1745-90. He was a pupil and successor of Peter Wamsley. Some writers have bestowed great praise on his violoncellos, but I am inclined to think that they have never drawn a bow across their strings. Those which I tried had a hard, rasping tone that set one's teeth on edge. The workmanship is not bad, although the varnish is rather poor stuff, of a dirty amber, or brownish-yellow colour. He used various labels.

SMITH, W. F., Edinburgh, contemporary. Average work.

SMITH, WILLIAM, Hedon: 1780-1805. Average work.

SMITH, WILLIAM, Leeds, contemporary. Indifferent.

SPIERS, STEWART, Ayr: 1805-70. Good work and tone.

SPICER, JOHN, London: c. 1667. That he was a maker of stringed instruments is a mere conjecture.

SPICER, WILLIAM, London: nineteenth century.

STANLEY, ROBERT A., Manchester, contemporary. He was born in Manchester, Nov. 14, 1860, and works at present at 87 City Road. He is a pupil of James Barrow, of Salford, and of James Cole, of Manchester. He has made two hundred violins, and a few violoncellos and double-basses

on an original model. He uses very good wood, and an oil varnish of his own make. Facsimile label :—

ROBERT A. STANLEY,
Violin & Bow Maker,
Manchester, 1900.

STIRRAT, DAVID, Edinburgh : 1810–20. I have never had the good fortune to see an example of this maker's work. He died at an early age, and there are probably but few specimens remaining of what were according to reliable accounts genuine works of art.

STREETS, JAMES, Sunderland, contemporary. An amateur who has made several violins and one or two violas of excellent workmanship and tone. A viola made by him in the year 1901 would do credit to a professional maker of long standing. It is a pity he cannot afford to turn his attention altogether to the art, for although the profession is already overcrowded, still there is always room for the born artist.

STRONG, JOHN, Somersetshire : c. 1650. An old viol-maker.

STRONG, MATTHEW, Huddersfield, contemporary. Average merit.

STURGE, H., Bristol and Huddersfield : 1800–60. A repairer.

T

TARR, WILLIAM, Manchester : 1808–91. He was born at Manchester, Feb. 21, 1808, and baptized a few days later at St. Mary's Church, of the same city. He was apprenticed by his father (a fustian cutter, who had himself made several instruments, including violins, 'cellos, and basses)

to a cabinet carver, and he became so expert a workman that at the age of eighteen he purchased his indentures from his master for £100, and he at once commenced work as a journeyman. At this age his parents became dependent upon him, and he maintained them for the rest of their lives. Having studied music, and desiring to play the double-bass, he set about making one for his own use. Two of his friends becoming aware of the fact persuaded him to make one for each of them also. So soon as these were completed, the one which he had made for himself was so eagerly coveted by another friend that he must needs let it go. And so it happened with nine others—all made in sets of three, with corners like a violin—he was not able to keep one of them for himself. Thus, although he had made twelve basses, he was still without a bass for his own use. Previous to the time when Tarr took up the gouge, there was not a single privately owned bass in Manchester, the only ones in use being the property of churches and theatres. A curious circumstance illustrating this fact is that a man who played the bass in the Old Theatre Royal for forty-nine years never had a bass in his own house. The instrument he played upon is now the property of Mr. W. H. Stewart, principal bass of the Crystal Palace. This instrument it was that created in Tarr a first longing to make and play one, and he was often seen in the gallery listening to its tones.

His business, subsequently, gradually resolved itself into that of violin- and bass-making, chiefly the latter, with that of repairing. He worked till he was about eighty years of age, and turned out two hundred and six basses, besides a number of violins, violas, and 'cellos. His eldest son was with him in the business till his eighteenth year, when he left home. Another son, Joseph, was also a violin-maker, and is now, I believe, in America. His youngest son, Shelley, is in business in Manchester. Tarr also built a number of organs and pianofortes, and took out several patents for his inventions in this line. At this time he had James Cole as pupil and assistant.

On the occasion of a great festival in Dublin, where Tarr was playing, each of the nine basses used were of his make. He was an excellent musician, and was for twelve years one of the bassists of the Gentlemen's Concerts orchestra, which was the nucleus from which Sir Charles Hallé formed his.

He was twice married, and had eleven children of each wife, in all eleven sons and eleven daughters, and in 1884 there were eleven of them living. He travelled a great deal in his lifetime, principally in the United States. Whilst in New Orleans he played in the theatre orchestra along with one of the sons of William Foster.

He was also for some time organist of one of the churches there. Tarr was during the latter and greater part of his life a prominent secularist, socialist, and anti-vaccinator. Still he numbered amongst his friends many priests and ministers, who alike valued his friendship and upright character. He was a fair Latin scholar, and was proud to speak of his father as one of the best Latin scholars in the city in his day. It may be cited here as an instance of the esteem in which he was held that a gentleman for whom he had done work, gave him a small annuity for the last ten or twelve years of his life. He adhered faithfully to his principles in the face of many difficulties. At the age of sixty he went seven days to prison rather than have his youngest child vaccinated, and would not allow any one to pay the fine, although many of his friends were anxious to do so.

He was a conscientious and a diligent worker. For the long stretch of sixty years he handled his gouge and turned out some really fine basses. These instruments are scattered all over the country; some are abroad, and not a few now bear forged labels and pass as Italian instruments.

Writers on the violin have done him scant justice, or no justice at all, and he felt it very keenly. Writing under date of Sept. 11, 1884, to his pupil and friend Mr. J. W. Briggs, of Glasgow, he says: "Hart has published another edition of his work, but my name is still not to be seen in it. And yet Cole my pupil has a line! It is somewhat strange."

Towards the end of 1886 he began to feel the weight of the heavy hand of adversity. He writes: "There will be a change very soon, as I cannot pay the rent . . . are still on my hands, and they keep me very poor . . . says he will enlist if something does not turn up in a day or two. I wish he would, much as I despise the army."

On laying down his tools he writes: "I have had a desperate struggle to give up the idea of working [May 1886], but it is all over now. I am totally incapable, and am more reconciled (*necessitas non habet legem*); so farewell work, my greatest joy! Farewell, my valued tools—we have cut our way together so long, but now we must part—a severe parting!" How simple and pathetic!

The following, written shortly after the above, shows his continued passion for his beloved art. "To-morrow I shall have another double-bass here, made out of the same wood (back and ribs) as yours. I made it for Father O'Toole, a Roman Catholic priest, in 1854, who has presented it to another priest, Father Callagham. Father Callagham says the bass is worth £40. The instrument will remain here till Saturday morning, and I should like you (*i.e.* Briggs) to see it. . . . Joe is making another violin for the Exhibition, and Shelley has bought wood for a 'cello! Joe feels determined — shall not filch away the gold medal as he did at — for work which was not his own."

When at death's door, leaning on the arm of his first love — the fiddle—he says: "My dear friend Briggs, I shall not be able to visit you again, I am so feeble. . . . I am sorry to say my daughter Eleanor died on the 23rd, and was buried on the 27th, of last month. My eldest daughter became a widow on the 1st of May last. . . . Leaving these sorrows, let us come back to the tenor. I have sufficient confidence in your knowledge of construction to leave it entirely in your hands. When finished, send your bill and I shall be glad to pay."

Sorrows were to him but passing clouds on the bright firmament of violin-making.

He possessed a remarkable memory for fiddles. It was as

infallible as that of William Ebsworth Hill. On one occasion his friend Briggs took him to see another friend of theirs in Wakefield, who, unknown to either, possessed a Tarr bass, and as soon as they entered the room Tarr exclaimed, "I remember that bass well. There is a flash in the base of the neck, and I had a devil of a job to keep it from springing out." He had not seen that bass for forty years!

He died on July 10, 1891, and was buried with secular rights in the Southern Cemetery, Manchester, on St. Swithin's day.

TAYLOR, B., London : c. 1750. Good work.

TENNANT, JAMES, Lesmahagow : nineteenth century. Indifferent.

THOMAS, WATKIN, Swansea, contemporary.

THOMPSON, CHARLES & SAMUEL, London : c. 1780. They were the sons of Robert Thompson, and succeeded him in business. It is not certain that they made many instruments themselves ; they were chiefly dealers.

THOMPSON, ROBERT, London : 1749-64. He worked at the sign of the "Bass-violin," in St. Paul's Churchyard. Good average work on the Stainer model.

THORNLEY, —, Oldham : nineteenth century.

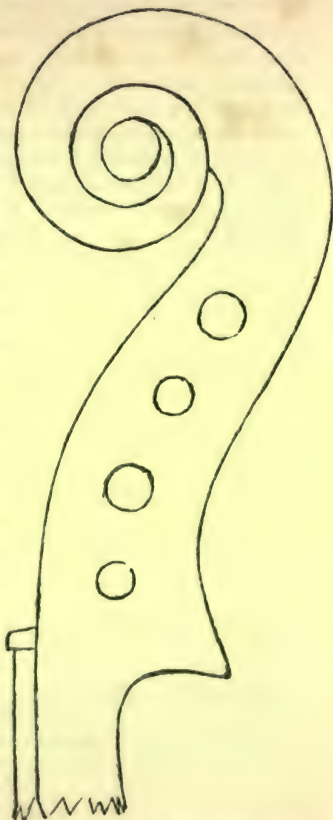
THORNE, W. H., Tottenham, contemporary. An amateur who has made only a few violins. One of these had most peculiar sound-holes, but a good tone.

TIFFIN, MILLER, Carlisle, contemporary.

TILLEY, THOMAS, London : c. 1770.

TOBIN, RICHARD, Dublin and London : 1787-1841. According to his own account he was born a few miles out of Dublin. His love for the fiddle dated back to early child-

hood, when he often heard its strains at merry-makings, wakes, &c. As a lad he was fond of making fiddles out of all sorts of boxes, &c. At the age of fourteen he made a fairly good instrument out of a willow block. This he sold to a neighbouring fiddler, who shortly after brought it to Perry and Wilkinson. Old Perry was struck with the workmanship of the embryo fiddle-maker, and sent word that he would teach him violin-making if he came to him. Needless to say, young Tobin accepted the invitation. This was about 1802, and Tobin remained with the Dublin firm eleven years. He soon became a very clever workman, and he made the majority of these magnificent instruments which brought fame and money to the house of Perry & Wilkinson. In 1813 he came to London, and found his way to the workshop of "old" Betts, who was quick to discover his abilities, and employed him till his (Betts') death in 1823. Tobin was eccentric and intemperate, and often tried the temper of Betts to the breaking point. When he had



EXACT OUTLINE OF SCROLL BY TOBIN.
(Actual size.)

saved up a little money and kept sober for perhaps three months at a stretch, the mania for drink would break out afresh, and he would go off on a fortnight or three weeks' carouse, till he had spent all his savings. When at work he was busy and of a most incommunicative turn of mind. He worked very fast, and would finish a scroll inside of two hours. The few instruments which bear his label are exceedingly handsome copies of Stradivari or Guarnerius, and they have a rich and mellow tone. The best instruments of the Dublin firm were made by him, as were also many of the choicest violins which bear the label of Betts. I do not think there are a dozen violins in existence which bear the label of Tobin himself, and I have not seen more than two. His scrolls are superb; never did Antonio Stradivari cut better, as the accompanying illustration will testify.

TORRING, L., London : 1800-10. He repaired chiefly.

TRIMNELL, JOSEPH HENRY, Birmingham, contemporary. Indifferent.

TUBBS, JAMES & SON, London, contemporary. A bow-maker. He works at 94 Wardour Street, and is the pupil of his father. His bows are considered to be superior to the best that are made to-day.

TURNER, WILLIAM, London : c. 1650. A viol-maker.

TUSON, ROBERT, Gravestown, contemporary

TWEEDY, J., Acklington, contemporary.

U

URQUHART, ALEXANDER, Invergordon, contemporary. He was born at Balblair, in the parish of Resolis, near Invergordon, Oct. 7, 1867. He is an amateur of artistic

tastes who turns out an occasional fiddle of excellent workmanship and tone. He follows the usual models, and also works on original lines.

Facsimile inscription (on bare wood):—

Alex. Urquhart
Invergordon

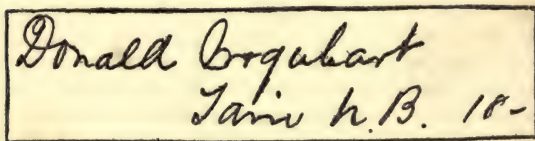
URQUHART, DONALD, Tain, N.B., contemporary. He was born at Balblair, near Invergordon, on Aug. 17, 1859, and educated at Jaminaville Free Church school, in the parish of Resolis. He has received no training in violin-making, but his highly developed sense of the beautiful, and masterly deftness in the handling of keen-edged tools, have enabled him to overcome the difficulties of the art. He commenced to make fiddles fifteen years ago, and also to experiment in varnish. Since then the varnish question has occupied a great deal of his attention, and it must be said that he has succeeded in producing an oil varnish of great beauty and lustre. This is made in three shades, dark yellow, light orange, and deep orange red. The colour is absolutely permanent in the strongest sunlight. During the varnishing the instruments are exposed to the full blaze of the sun from April to September in a conservatory window, where the thermometer on sunny days registers 125 degrees (Fahr.). The colour is not affected in the least—if anything, it becomes more lustrous after this fiery ordeal. The one drawback of the varnish is that, being so tough and elastic, it is exceedingly difficult to polish, and takes months to dry even in the strongest sunlight, but Mr. Urquhart succeeds in giving it a perfectly polished surface.

The outline and arching are those of a full-sized Strad. The sound-holes are modified. The scroll is altogether original and a most graceful piece of work. Its chief differentiating characteristic is the deep scooping of the volute

and the consequent boldness of its axis. In no other maker have I observed this peculiarity turned to advantage. The wood of the back is of the usual description and of good quality, whilst that of the belly is really fine. The "reed" of the pine in the two specimens I examined is fully one-seventh of an inch wide, and is even throughout.

The edges are strong, and the margin full. The thicknesses are carefully graduated and the instruments are left strong in wood. The inside is finished so finely that the wood has a polish, and there is not a suspicion of the presence of glue lines.

The tone, although not powerful, is sweet and mellow. On the D and A strings it is fine. The first octave on the third string has the juicy richness of the Chalumeau in the clarinet. Had Urquhart succeeded in getting power along with this characteristic, he would have created something new in violin tone, which is about as possible, perhaps, as the existence of a pair of contradictories which are compatible with regard to both truth and falsehood. Facsimile label :—



Donald Urquhart
Jan. 18.

URQUHART, THOMAS, London : 1650-80. The best part of the work is the varnish, which very closely resembles the Italian varnish. I have seen only one genuine violin of his make, which was much arched, and had a sweet but very small tone.

V

VAUGHAN, DAVID ROBERT, Chester, contemporary. He was born at Mold, Aug. 6, 1860. He follows

the Stradivari model, and makes instruments of good average merit as regards workmanship and tone.

VICKERS, RICHARD, Bath : nineteenth century.

VOYLE, BENJAMIN, Gower : 1860-87. Average ability.

W

WADE, JOSEPH, Leeds : nineteenth century.

WADE, WILLIAM, Leeds : nineteenth century.

WALKER, H. J., Whitby, contemporary. His instruments are said to be very good.

WALKER, HECTOR M., Liverpool, contemporary. He has made a few violins experimentally.

WALTON, WILLIAM, Preston, contemporary. He was born at Longton, Aug. 7, 1860, and he now lives at Howick Station, Longton, near Preston. He is the son of Henry and Jane Walton, and is the eldest child of a family of ten. He was educated at the national school of his native village. In the year 1871 he was sent to work in a cotton-mill, where he remained till he was twenty. In 1880 he joined the railway service, where he steadily worked himself up through the various grades till, in 1889, he was appointed stationmaster of Howick, a rapidly growing district. He was married on October 18, 1884, at Saul Street Chapel, Preston, to Alice, daughter of Lawrence Hunt, of Hoole. He has three children, named Jane, John, and Alice Hunt.

He commenced violin-making *en amateur* in 1887, and since then he has turned out one or two instruments every year, besides repairing a great number. In 1893 he became interested in the varnish question, and was soon deep in experiment. With the help of a friendly chemist he at last

succeeded in producing an amber oil varnish of excellent *pâte* and lustre. This splendid solution is elastic, tough, and beautifully transparent. It consists of pure amber in solution in oil, with the colour developed (not added) during the process.

Mr. Walton uses beautiful wood of excellent properties. In one instance he has used Oregon pine for the belly, and the result compares very favourably with that of more orthodox material. He works on the Joseph lines from drawings published by Mr. Honeyman, on the Strad lines after the outlines of Riechers, and also on an original outline and model. The measurements of the last are as follows :—

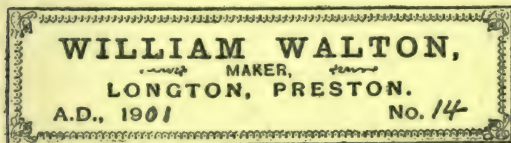
Length of body	$14\frac{1}{8}$ inches.
Width across upper bouts	$6\frac{3}{4}$ "
" " middle bouts	$4\frac{1}{2}$ "
" " lower bouts	$8\frac{1}{4}$ "
Length of sound-holes	$2\frac{1}{16}$ "
Distance between sound-holes	$1\frac{1}{16}$ "
Length of C's	3 "
Depth of ribs at bottom	$1\frac{1}{4}$ "
" " top	$1\frac{3}{16}$ "
" model at bridge	$2\frac{7}{16}$ "

Mr. Walton is a born artist, and his workmanship is magnificent. There is a breadth of conception coupled with tenderness of expression about the work which gives it the air of dignified art. The scroll is thrown with vigour, and the mind is free from suggestions of *effort* in following the graceful lines of the volute. The same easy flow is observed in the upper and lower turns of the sound-holes. The curve of the model along the longitudinal axes (back and belly) reminds one of the gentle, natural arch of a cord in vibration. The purfling is wide and bold, the margins a little narrow, and the edges round and strong. The corners of the Strad copies have not the Riechers characteristics, being a shade longer, and cut cleanly and square. The button is full, and is perhaps the very tiniest bit too long in proportion to its width

—in fact, if it were gently toned down about one thirty-second all round, it would be more in keeping with the highly graceful lines of the original model. The work of this maker merits criticism only from the highest standpoint. In works of the third or even second order, a sixteenth of an inch in any one part, more or less, is immaterial to the physiognomy of the fiddle. Not so in work of the kind under our consideration.

The most scrupulous care should be paid to the smallest matter of detail. Nature is particular to the *n*th, and so must art be if it would be natural.

The tone of the two instruments submitted for my inspection is very similar in both cases, and has fulness, equality, sympathy, and carrying power. Facsimile label :—



WAMSLEY, PETER, London : 1715-51. The particulars given respecting this old maker in other books are, unfortunately, all that can be picked up from the dust of the past. I have nothing new to add, and therefore had better not say anything.

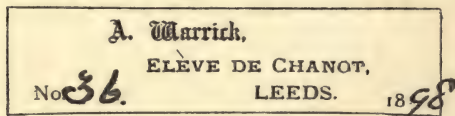
WARD, —, Dublin : nineteenth century.

WARDLAW, RICHARD, Cardiff, contemporary. An amateur of average attainments.

WARRICK, A., Leeds, contemporary. He was born at Reading, Oct. 9, 1863, and has his workshops at 61 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, and at 24 Church Bank, Bradford. He served a six-years' apprenticeship, from 1884 to 1890, with G. A. Chanot of Manchester. He works on various models,

but chiefly on those of Stradivari and Guarneri. He does not attempt to work on original lines, or to modify the model in any way; he is a close copyist, and concentrates all his energy upon the exact reproduction of outline, arching, depth, thicknesses, &c., of the originals. He uses excellent wood, and the work is beautifully finished throughout. The varnish is his own composition, made in four colours, golden yellow, reddish yellow, brown red, and ruby. It has much the same characteristics as the varnish traditionally associated with the house of Chanot. Warrick has made a large number of instruments, big and small, and he also repairs extensively. He was awarded the sole gold medal at the Leeds International Exhibition, 1895, for an exhibit of violins.

His price for violins is twelve and fifteen guineas, and for violoncellos twenty. Facsimile label :—



WARWICK, REGINALD, Northampton, contemporary. Average ability.

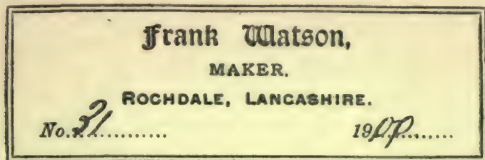
WATSON, FRANK, Rochdale, contemporary. He was born at Rochdale, Aug. 20, 1866. He is a pupil of the late J. Priestnall. When about thirteen years of age he had the misfortune to become affected with hip-joint disease, which invalided him for a long number of years, and it was during his convalescence that he got acquainted with Mr. Priestnall, and, becoming enamoured with the art of violin-making, was taught by him the method of construction. He ultimately started work on his own account, and up to date he has built seventy-three violins, one viola, and two 'cellos. He has also repaired a great number of instruments. He works chiefly on the Strad and Joseph outlines, and occasionally on an original model. The workmanship is good,



*Yours very truly,
James Whitlaw.*

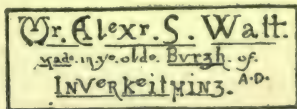


and the tone large and telling. Watson is a skilled repairer.
Facsimile label :—



WATSON, JOHN (Rev.), Lerwick, Shetland, contemporary. A Presbyterian minister who has made several violins of excellent workmanship and tone. I cannot say that I like his model, but no fault can be found with any other part of the work. I have seen only one of his instruments—the library walls of South Yell manse are lined with them—which had a peculiar outline, but a very sweet and moderately powerful tone.

WATT, ALEXANDER STOCKS, Inverkeithing, contemporary. He was born in Edinburgh, Aug. 17, 1859. A gentleman amateur whose work is as beautiful as it is rare. A copy of the "Count Cessol" Stradivari made by him was amongst the finest for delicate workmanship that I have ever seen. He spends two, and sometimes three years over a single violin, but when it is finished it is an artistic gem. The tone is sweet and mellow. Facsimile label :—



WEAVER, SAMUEL, London: 1780–1800. Ordinary work.

WHITELAW, JAMES, Glasgow, contemporary. He was born at Johnstone, in 1852, and he carries on business as

a chemist at 496 St. George's Road, Glasgow. He is not a violin-maker, but he is the discoverer and manufacturer of the finest violin varnish on the market to-day, and as such he claims an honourable place in any dictionary of violin-makers. As in the case of Mr. Edward Heron-Allen, so in the present one, although Mr. Whitelaw does not make violins himself, still he has made it possible for others to make them. There are many amateur, and not a few professional, makers to-day who would never be able to finish their instruments as they do were it not for the diligent research and hard labour of this chemist. It is within my knowledge that many have been induced to take up the gouge mainly because there was within their reach a beautiful varnish at a moderate cost. I am not going to discuss the merits of the varnish here, as I have already done so, but it is necessary to give a short account of its discovery. I cannot do better than give the words of the discoverer himself, as quoted by Mr. William C. Honeyman in his "Scottish Violin-Makers," p. 98. He says:—

"I was lying in bed on the last Sunday morning of February 1886, about five o'clock, I think. Whether I was asleep or awake I could never be certain. Suddenly my bedroom seemed transformed into an old-fashioned-looking kitchen, in which was a large dresser with a lighted candle at one end. Above the dresser, instead of crockery and household odds and ends, there were rows of fiddles hanging on the wall. While I was looking at this display of fiddles, a very tall and majestic man came into the kitchen. He had on a little round white cap and a white leather apron, his hair was nearly white, and in little crisp curls. He had beautiful grey eyes, and a very pleasant expression. He spoke to me, and I asked him about the violins on the wall. He said they had all been made in Cremona, and among other things told me about the varnish being a secret.

"He now took down a violin from the wall, and, having removed the candle to the middle of the dresser, he held the violin up behind the flame at an angle of about forty-five degrees, and, moving it from side to side, he asked me if I could

see the beautiful satin-like glint which followed the candle flame. I said—‘Yes.’ ‘Well!’ he said, ‘that is a peculiarity of the varnish.’ After some further conversation I asked him if amber was used in making the varnish. He said—‘It is amber varnish, and the solvents are lead and lime.’ Just at that moment the vision disappeared, and I awakened and found that during the awakening ‘lead and lime,’ by some mysterious process, had in my mind become converted into two quite different substances. Impelled by curiosity I got up at once, and hurried to my shop. It was now 7 A.M. I hastily fitted together some odd pieces of apparatus sufficient for the experiment, and before 8.30 I had the satisfaction of knowing that I could dissolve amber without chemical disintegration.

“From the foregoing it can be seen that I had really very little to do with the discovery, and I cannot claim much credit on that point; but, as I found out afterwards, it is one thing to dissolve amber but quite another matter to make it into a working varnish. It was fully a year before I had varnish to try on a violin, and nearly three years before I had a bottle ready for sale, so that the discovery was not completed without a considerable amount of trouble and anxiety.”

Mr. Whitelaw makes his varnish in nine different colours, viz. pale amber yellow, dark amber yellow, dark ruddy brown, orange, orange red, dark orange red, “Amati,” pale ruby, and dark ruby. It is equally lustrous and transparent in all the colours, and it is difficult to conceive how a more beautiful varnish can ever be made. Mr. Whitelaw is a gentleman of high artistic tastes, and an art critic of recognised authority.

WHITESIDE, HENRY, Liverpool and Solva: 1749–1824. He made many violins in Fontenoy Street, Liverpool, and afterwards at Solva, Pembrokeshire. He was the famous builder of the Smalls lighthouse, and he established for himself a wide reputation in West Pembrokeshire a century ago as an engineer, musical instrument maker, and Merlin *redivivus*.

The following particulars are culled from the *Pembroke County Guardian* for Nov. 18, 1899, from an article written some forty years previously :—

“ . . . When the wishes of Mr. Phillips (the projector of the Smalls lighthouse) were made public, a great many persons sent in designs for a suitable erection to the committee appointed by him to carry out his intentions, but preference was given to the plans of a young man, a musical instrument maker, who was also engaged as its builder.

“ Mr. Henry Whiteside was a native of Liverpool ; he was born, it is believed, in Fontenoy Street, in the year 1746, where his parents possessed some houses, and which afterwards became his property. He possessed at an early age a mechanical taste, and was allowed to follow the bent of his inclination at the carpenter's bench. He soon gave his attention—from a love and knowledge of music—to the construction of violins, some of which are now in Pembrokeshire, and considered of great value ; afterwards he turned his skill to the building of spinets and upright harpsichords, in which he excelled, as the ones now extant prove. Mr. Whiteside had a brother named Gilbert, who was blind from his birth, and who possessed extraordinary powers as a musician. The desire of Mr. Gilbert Whiteside to alleviate the sufferings of those deprived of sight like himself was so great that he would even seek for, and wait upon them, week after week, and month after month, until he had made them masters of some musical instrument, either as a source of amusement or of income for themselves.

“ At the time Henry Whiteside came to Pembrokeshire to construct the lighthouse, in the summer of 1772, he was a very young man, scarcely twenty-six, and probably—though a resident of such a considerable shipping port as Liverpool was even then—a novice in nautical matters, with which he would eventually have much to do. His undertaking was a sudden transition from the sweet and harmonious sounds of his own musical instruments, to the rough surging of the Atlantic wave, and the discordant howling of a maddened hurricane ; and

from the fastening of a delicately formed fiddle, to the fixing of giant oaken-pillars in a rock as hard as adamant !

“Tradition has it that Whiteside possessed a most interesting personality. Many tales are related of him. Here is a characteristic one :

“‘He once led a party of volunteers from Solva to oppose the French at Strumble Head. He rode a horse belonging to Mr. Barsey, of Lecha. While he feared nothing for himself, he feared much that the French aggressors would kill Mr. Barsey’s mare.’

“His cleverness and persistent personality greatly impressed the simple-minded peasantry. He was, as a matter of course, said to be in league with his Satanic majesty, as all cleverness was believed by the people of Dyved to emanate from the nether regions. The lighthouse, although a device made to baffle the powers of darkness, was regarded as an extraordinarily successful piece of jugglery.

“A story is told of a young woman, a Miss Rees, the only daughter of a farmer living near Llandruidion, who on paying the lighthouse a visit with several others, during its temporary erection, and viewing herself in the angular reflectors of the light-room, exclaimed, ‘People say that Georgy Rees has only one daughter, let them come here and they’ll see that he has many. I am quite beside myself with the beauty of my sisters.’

“It is said that he often went out to the cliffs during a storm and tuned his fiddle to the wail of the wind. It is also said that he spent all his spare moments, when not occupied in constructing the lighthouse (or, after it was completed, in acting as agent to the establishment), in making harpsichords, spinets, and fiddles.

“On his arrival in Solva, he lodged in the (Old) Ship Inn, at that time one of the two public-houses in Lower Solva, and indeed one of the four or five straw-thatched dwellings that then constituted the now important and improving place. The Old Ship stood where the establishment of the Messrs. Davies—the Mariners’ Inn—now stands. It was kept by

one William Bevan, whose youngest daughter, Martha, Mr. Whiteside married at Whitchurch, September 16, 1780.

"On the 5th day of July, 1824, at the advanced age of 78, and after a long illness, Mr. Whiteside died at his residence—the Harbour House—in Lower Solva. He was buried at Whitchurch, where the remains of his wife were also deposited in 1832. Two plain tombstones are erected to their memories."

I have seen only one of his violins, which was a beautifully made copy of the grand Strad model, with somewhat Stainer-like sound-holes. The varnish was an oil one, of dark nut-brown colour, and of excellent quality. The tone was mellow and moderately powerful. It is said that well-nigh every farmhouse in the Solva neighbourhood at one time possessed a Whiteside fiddle or harpsichord, but they are gone the way of all things perishable.

WHITMARSH, EMMANUEL, London, contemporary. I cannot give any biographical particulars, but I have seen a great deal of his work. Nor am I certain that the present Emmanuel Whitmarsh is the same that turned out excellent instruments some twenty-five or thirty years ago. The work does not seem to me to have the same characteristics. The present maker of that name makes principally for the wholesale houses. The Messrs. Dawkins, of 17 Charterhouse Street, Holborn Circus, have been his agents for some years past. The work is very carefully finished, and the tone usually clear, firm, and sweet.

WHITTAKER, BUTTON &, Leeds: 1805–30.

WIGAN, DAVID, Shrewsbury, contemporary. Average work.

WIGHTMAN, GEORGE, London: c. 1760.

WILKS, ALFRED, Manchester, contemporary. An amateur.

WILLIAMS, ALFRED, Cheltenham, contemporary. He was born at Redditch, June 28, 1840, and he works at 8 Great Western Road, Cheltenham. He has made a good number of instruments, which are of rather above average merit as regards workmanship, and very good as regards tone. He works on the two leading models, and inserts a differently worded label into each copy. Facsimile of one of the labels :—

Joseph Guarnerius
fecit
Cremona Anno 1742.
Alfred Williams.

WILLIAMS, BENJAMIN, Aberavon : 1768–1839. It is very remarkable that Wales, the land of song (“*Môr o gân yw Cymru gyd*”), has produced so few violin-makers. This is probably due to the fact that she has cultivated vocal at the entire expense of instrumental music. The orchestra is all but *non est* in Wales. But then, the Welsh people have ceased to be an artistic people. Even their bards to-day know no other art than that of *cynghanedd*, and it is even doubtful if a quasi-esoteric use of numbers be a sufficiently important art to command the homage of the best talent. And where the orchestra is an unknown quantity, the art of fiddle-making may be denoted by zero.

The only Welsh fiddle-maker (barring a few who made sporadic and amateurish efforts) was Benjamin Williams of Aberavon, a joiner by trade. This maker was born in 1768, and died in 1839. He was buried in Michaelston-super-avan Churchyard, but there is no tombstone to mark his resting-place. His grandson, John Davies, now living at Ystrad, Rhondda Valley, who is seventy-five years of age, and who can remember his grandfather very well, says that Benjamin Williams was a tall, wiry, broad-browed man, with a patriarchal crop of snow-white hair and beard. He

habitually wore a leathern apron and a skull-cap (Had he heard of old Antonio?), and was much addicted to tobacco-chewing. He is said to have made about eighty fiddles and a few Welsh harps during leisure moments, when joinery work happened to be slack.

Several of these fiddles are said to be in existence to-day, but I know of only three, one of which is in my possession. The following is a brief description of this last.

The outline and model approximate to those of N. Amati. Probably the maker had a Duke fiddle as model, since the measurements are identical with those of a genuine Duke of the date 1768. The back is cut *sur couche*, and the wood is sycamore of rather plain figure. The pine of the belly is very fine and even-grained. The sound-holes are somewhat after the Stainer pattern. The scroll is much worn at the left boss of the volute, but it is thrown with a firm hand and full of decision and meaning. The varnish is a pale, straw-coloured one, elastic and transparent. The tone is not large, but it is sweet, round, and free.

The instrument is the work of a man who knew how to handle his gouge and calipers.

Williams obtained his pine from abroad, but he cut his sycamore in the Margam woods. He rubbed linseed oil and turpentine into his fiddles, and then hung them up for a long season to dry before varnishing them. The varnish is a spirit one, laid on in three or four thin coats. Williams was known locally as "Benny'r fiddler," as he was a player as well as a maker of fiddles. It is said that he played beautifully on one of his own make instruments, and that his services were frequently requisitioned at local weddings, dances, &c. He also, as needs would have it, wielded the magic wand, and a story is told of his laying a ghost at Penhydd by playing a certain tune on his fiddle at the haunted spot on three successive nights.

The fiddle on which he then played was made specially for the occasion, and had its back of mountain-ash, and a drop of dragon's blood was mixed with the varnish. Tradition does not say whence he obtained this drop of blood. It was not the

gum known by that name, for he did not use it, and this had no affinity to the methods of magic. Williams could write a beautiful hand, and no doubt his smattering of English and knowledge of about a dozen Latin words magnified him to Merlin-like proportions in the estimate of his fellows.

Two local country-side fiddlers, Ianto'r Garth and Deio Llantrisant, played upon fiddles of his make. Another noted village-green fiddler, Levi Gibbon, of Fishguard, played upon a Williams fiddle, and people who remember this really fine player (albeit humble) said his instrument had a tone like that of a flute. It is said that Williams won his spouse by the cunning of his bow. Ann Davies was a young woman of beauty, and the daughter of a well-to-do local farmer. The fiddle-maker wooed her, and wooed not in vain, though the young woman's parents resented the match. The fiddler's playing appealed to the heart of Ann, and, helped by the dignified bearing of his princely figure, was completely successful in making captive the maiden's heart. He would play in the wood opposite her dwelling, and the pathetic pleading of the notes borne on the wings of the breeze reached the ears of Ann, and brought her out to the sylvan retreats. During one of these rambles the vow was made, when both swore eternal love to the music of the fiddle.

WILLIAMS, O. R., Manchester, contemporary. I have not seen any of his instruments.

WILSON, JAMES L., Greenock, contemporary. He was born in Galston, April 13, 1847, and he works at 20 Octavia Cottages, Greenock. He is not a professional maker, albeit his work has not a trace of the amateur about it. Nothing can be more true to the original than his copies of Gasparo da Saló, nor more beautifully finished than his last half-a-dozen instruments. He got a few lessons in violin-making from the late John A. Mann, and being of an artistic turn of mind, he soon made progress. He can paint very fairly in oil and water-colours, and he generally draws a bust of himself with indelible ink on the back of the violin under

the button. His work as an amateur violin-maker is of great merit, and will bring him considerable fame by-and-by if he perseveres with it. He won the gold medal for an exhibit of violins at the Greenock Exhibition, 1893. Facsimile inscription (no label):—

made by

James L. Wilson

*18
99*

No 19

WILTON, JAMES, Whitby, contemporary. He worked for H. J. Walker, of Whitby, for some time, but he now makes and repairs on his own account. Good average work and tone.

WISE, CHRISTOPHER, London: *c.* 1656. He was chiefly a maker of viols, and made but few violins.

WITHERS, EDWARD, London: 1808–75. He was born in London, Dec. 23, 1808, and died there Dec. 19, 1875. He was the son of Edward and Mary Ann Withers. He was not trained in the usual way, but he bought the business of R. & W. Davis, 31 Coventry Street, Haymarket, in the year 1843, and thus started what proved to be a bright career in violin-making. He followed the Strad and Guarnerius models exclusively, and made a large number of instruments, some of which, in point of workmanship and tone, will compare favourably with the best work of our classical school. He is the maker of the famous Withers' Quartet—said to be the finest English quartet of instruments in existence, made previous to the year 1870.

These instruments, from their importance, demand a brief notice. They were made between fifty and sixty years ago at the old premises, 31 Coventry Street. Somewhere near the period mentioned, the roof of the shop underwent repairs,



C. Withers



Edward Withers

and the builder's workmen had occasion to lay down a plank along the attic floor to walk upon. It chanced at the completion of the repairs that the workmen forgot to remove this same plank, and one day old Mr. Withers finding his way into the attic, discovered it. He saw that it was maple, and as perfect a specimen of its kind as eyes could ever gaze upon. The story is soon told. The plank was transformed into [backs of] a quartet—now *the* English quartet, *par excellence*. The instruments are beautifully coated in amber varnish. One of the fiddles has been sold and re-sold twice, realising each time £50. Its purchaser on one occasion was Mr. L. d'Egville, who presented it to Wilhelmj. The companion violin was sold at first for £30, but it realised later £120. The tenor was sold for £40, and the violoncello for £150.

The present owner of the quartet is Mr. Edward Withers, of 22 Wardour Street, a son, and the representative of the firm. He says that the treasure shall never leave the family, but will be handed down the stages of time as a valued heirloom. Edward Withers had eight children—four sons and four daughters—two of whom are in the trade, and one of them, Mr. Edward Withers, noticed below, is an actual maker. He died at the age of sixty-seven, and was buried in Brompton Cemetery. Facsimile label :—



WITHERS, EDWARD, London, contemporary. He was born in London, Oct. 22, 1844, and is the eldest son of the above Edward Withers.

He received his early education at Fulham. He is the

only pupil of his father and of John Lott, the well-known violin-maker. He commenced business at 31 Coventry Street, London, in 1856, and moved later to 22 Wardour Street. He worked with his father for a period of over twenty-five years, and during that time made many new instruments, and also executed nearly all the principal repairs that were entrusted to the firm. Mr. Withers copies exclusively the Stradivarius and Guarnerius models, using very old and carefully selected wood. His varnish is entirely oil, and varies in colour from amber to brown and red or golden red. His method of varnishing is unique. He always puts amber varnish on the wood and then hangs the fiddle up to dry for some years before putting the colour on. The colour is also oil.

He has made a large number of instruments, including violins, tenors, and violoncellos. He turns out on an average about twelve instruments per year. All these reach a high standard of excellence, and are characterised as much for their beautiful tone as for their exquisite appearance. His prices are: violins and tenors from £10 to £65; violoncellos from £20 to £150.

On June 1, 1893, he was appointed by Royal Warrant violin-maker to H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh.

Three sons now assist him in the business. These are: Edward Sidney Munns, born Aug. 3, 1870; Sidney Bernard, born Oct. 22, 1873; and Douglas Sidney, born Aug. 10, 1879.

In Nov. 1896 Mr. Withers invented the new sound-post, now universally known as "E. Withers' Patent Prepared Hollow Sound-Post."

Mr. Withers is one of those who believe in oil varnish. He expresses a strong belief that the varnish affects the quality of the tone to an extent not allowed by the majority of writers on the subject. Acting on this belief he was led early in life to pay a close attention to the varnish question, and to conduct a series of experiments with the view of wringing the secret out of the great Ghost of Cremona. It is this belief

also which prompts him now to spend such time over the varnishing process. Certain it is that his varnish is exceedingly good and well laid on. It is rich, "juicy," and withal perfectly transparent.

Mr. Withers plays the violin, tenor and 'cello, and has frequent quartet and symphony parties at his private house, Elmwood, Atkins Road, Clapham Park.

His label, it will be observed from the following facsimile, is not dated. It is almost identical with that used by his father, only having in addition the name of the street and number of the house. Facsimile label :—



WOOD, G. F., London, contemporary. Very good work and tone.

WOODNEY, H., Manchester : nineteenth century.

WORDEN, JAMES, Preston, contemporary. He was born at Leyland, Aug. 25, 1839, and is the son of George and Ann Worden.

The father was a descendant of the Wordens of old Worden Hall, and the mother a descendant of the Plessingtons, of the Dimples, an old Lancashire family. The mother's family gave the Roman Catholics their last British martyr, to wit the Rev. J. Plessington, who was executed in the year 1678.

Mr. Worden received a liberal elementary education at the school of the Christian Brothers, at Preston.

He was married in the year 1868, to Miss Mary Anne Stirzaker, at the church of St. Joseph, Preston.

He served an apprenticeship at the trade of cabinet-making. In the year 1870 he went to Mr. Francis Booth, of Wakefield, to learn the trade of organ building, and later to the firm of Messrs. Gray & Davidson. He is a practical pianoforte-maker and organ builder, as well as violin-maker, and his workshop at 83 Friargate Gate, is well known in and around Preston.

He has made up to date fifty violins, one tenor, one 'cello, and one guitar. He makes on different models, mostly on that of Stradivari, but sometimes on an adopted model of his own, based on the lines of Maggini.

The workmanship is excellent. The wood is well chosen for its acoustic properties, and is generally handsome in appearance. The sound-holes in the instruments, made on original lines, are a hybrid between those of Strad and Joseph. The scroll is beautifully carved and exceedingly graceful *per se*, but when viewed as a part of the whole, it impresses the mind with a sense of longing after the bold and the massive. It is too slender for this giant model.

The button is not of the usual modern British type, but is somewhat smaller and more elongated.

One of Mr. Worden's instruments has a Panormo back cut from a partly worked block, which was discarded by the noted Vincenzo owing to a few worm-holes.

There is ample evidence that it is a block out of the famous billiard table. It is magnificent wood, with beautiful cloud-like coruscations, and a broad, vivid flame. This fiddle is on the Strad lines, well-made and full of character.

Mr. Worden uses Whitelaw's varnish in the various colours, and also Walton's. The tone is beautifully sweet and velvet-like. The Panormo back fiddle has a round, clear, and penetrating tone.

This maker has led a very active musical career. In 1883 he founded the Preston Harmonic Society, which society still exists and is conducted by its founder. In 1884 he was

appointed conductor of the Preston Orpheonic Male Voice Choir, and he led them at the Liverpool Eisteddfod in that year; at the Inventions, London, in 1885, where they took the second prize; and at the Liverpool Exhibition in 1886.

He has also, up to within a recent date, been associated with all the work of the Preston Choral Society, and looks back with much pleasure to his association with its wholly admirable conductor, Signor Luigi Resegari. Facsimile label:—



*James Worden, Maker,
Preston. 1800
SUB TITULO, ST Cecilia*

The Paschal Lamb, with the motto *Princeps Pacis*, is the coat of arms of the Borough of Preston.

Each instrument as it is finished is dedicated to, and put under the protection of, some well-known saint.

WRIGHT, DANIEL, London: c. 1745. Nothing is known of him.

WRIGHT, EBENEZER, South Shields, contemporary. Average ability.

Y

YATES, RICHARD, Manchester, contemporary. A beginner whose work evinces exceptional talent. If circumstances will but allow him to devote his time to the art, he will later on turn out work that will place him in the front rank of modern luthiers.

YEATS, HENRY, London, contemporary. A gentleman amateur whose work is said to be excellent. I regret,

therefore, that I am not acquainted with him, and that I have not seen any of his instruments. He resides at 17 Pendennis Road, Streatham, S.W., and owns a fine collection of Italian instruments.

YOOLE, WILLIAM, St. Andrews : 1806-68. I have never seen any of his work.

YOUNG, JAMES, Edinburgh, contemporary.

YOUNG, JOHN, London : *c.* 1700. No instruments of his are known, but we learn from the curious verses of Purcell that he was a maker.

YOUNGMAN, M., Halifax, contemporary. He was born at Stanton, Nov. 28, 1860. His work is carefully finished, and the tone is large and brilliant. He works mostly on an original model, which, although by no means graceful, shows some strength and insight. He uses Whitelaw's varnish, or sometimes Whitelaw's mixed with Caffyn's. He won the silver medal in the amateur class for a case of violins at the Yorkshire and West Riding Exhibition, 1893; and the gold medal at the same Exhibition in 1895.

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